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## STRATEGY OF LIVING

### **Strategy of Living**

The author here presents a study in the application to the social, political, religious, and personal problems of life and human destiny of a practical philosophy of life based on the ideas of wisdom and happiness which are compared and contrasted with those of goodness and virtue. The causes of present difficulties and confusions are discussed, and a new approach to living and thinking is suggested as the only way likely to lead to satisfaction and fulfilment in the individual and harmonious purpose in the community. The critical nature of the choice now facing human society is stressed and its spiritual basis analyzed together with its dependence on the nature of personal and social relationships. The strategy of living is regarded as "both a science and an art—a combination of ordered planning and rational foresight with a creative adaptability in meeting an endless variety of situations."

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HAPPINESS, FREEDOM, AND GOD

METHODS AND EXPERIMENTS  
IN MENTAL TESTS

---

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THE GROWTH AND VARIABILITY  
OF INTELLIGENCE

# *STRATEGY of LIVING*

by

C. A. Richardson M.A.

Strategy is the science and art of effectively combining all the resources available for the pursuit of an ultimate end.



London

George G. Harrap and Company Ltd.

Sydney Toronto Bombay Stockholm

TO  
MY WIFE

*First published 1944*

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THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN  
COMPLETE CONFORMITY WITH THE  
AUTHORIZED ECONOMY STANDARDS

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## PREFACE

LIFE IS A STRUGGLE, but whether the struggle is one of zest or of desperation depends on the participants. It is the purpose of this book to suggest an end and aim which will render this struggle intelligible, and to investigate the means most likely to be effective in the pursuit of that end—means which may at the same time transform the endeavours of human beings to adjust their relations to one another and to the universe, for it is in this that the struggle consists, from a process marked by desperate conflict to one of harmony and joy.

In this book I shall be concerned for the most part only with the general principles which seem to me to determine the nature of the steps to be taken, and the mental and spiritual attitude to be adopted, if progress is to be made towards the desired goal. That is why I have called it *Strategy of Living*. With the methods of detailed application of these general principles to particular situations—the ‘tactics’ of living—I am not primarily concerned, though on occasion I shall for various reasons, sometimes illustrative, stray into this field. I am aware that the investigation and statement of general principles is in some ways a much easier and less complex task than the detailed implementation of these principles in practice, but the former is a necessary preliminary to the latter, a fact which is frequently lost sight of with unfortunate results. We cannot hope to make progress towards our final aim, in day-to-day living, until the general principles on which this progress depends are formulated, understood, and *accepted*.

The strategy of living is both a science and an art—a combination of ordered planning and rational foresight with a creative adaptability in meeting an endless variety of situations. Over-emphasis on either aspect at the expense of the other is fatal, leading to mechanical regimentation, on the one hand, or

## STRATEGY OF LIVING

to a muddled *laissez faire*, on the other. In the long run either process necessarily defeats its own end.

I should not presume to dogmatize or to quibble over details. But I believe that unless we, as individuals and as a community, accept and act upon principles of the kind which are discussed in the sequel, we may well be set upon a path leading inevitably to grim conflict and ultimate chaos. This is a path along which we have already taken more than a few steps which circumstances may now have given us a chance—perhaps a last chance—of retracing. If I did not believe this there would have been no point in writing what I have written.

It may be felt that much of what I shall have to say is impracticable and idealistic. I believe, on the contrary, that it is intensely realistic, for, if my thesis is sound, the question at issue is literally a matter of survival or extinction.

I have tried to express more technically the deeper philosophy on which my argument is finally based in my book *Happiness, Freedom, and God*, and if any reader feels that my reasoning is incomplete I can only refer him to that book, to which I have made detailed reference here and there in the text which follows.

To all those friends and colleagues—too many to mention severally—from whom I have received help and inspiration in the discussion of various topics related directly or indirectly to my main theme, I am happy to express my gratitude and appreciation.

C. A. R.

*June 1944*

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## *Chapter I*

### *THE AIM OF HUMAN EXISTENCE*

THE AIR IS FULL at the present time of plans for reconstructing the fabric within which human life is carried on. There are schemes for improving social services and the conditions of work ; for establishing social, national, and international security ; for making available to all the advantages of culture in the widest sense ; and for harvesting the achievements of science for the benefit, rather than for the destruction, of mankind. But less attention has been paid to determining what is the final aim of all this proposed activity. Indeed, one rarely hears the question put as to just *why* we are planning to carry out schemes like these. There is a kind of general feeling that the latter are good in themselves, and that is all that matters.

All the hoped-for developments I have mentioned are, however, means and not ends ; and it seems clear that, without some fundamental determining principle to permeate and unify them, they will come to naught. This determining principle can only be sought by trying to discover how a meaning and a purpose can be given to human existence. In the last resort what are we all really aiming at, and is our aim significant and capable of achievement ? What are we all hoping for in the end, whether in this life or in some existence beyond it, and is there any prospect of our hopes being fulfilled ? Unless some answer can be given to these questions all our plans for the future are meaningless and will lead to nothing but a busy activity which is blind to all but the present and ignorant of whither it is tending and with what likely result.

I think that if we reflect upon this matter we can come to no other conclusion than that the only aim of human endeavour which has any real meaning is the attainment by each individual

of a state of being, or, if you like, a state of mind, for the two really come to the same thing in the end, which shall be completely desirable and completely satisfying *in itself*. The attainment of such a goal by every individual implies, of course, its attainment by the community as a whole, for the community consists of the individuals composing it.

Now we have evidence of the possibility of such a state of being, and some indication of its nature and of the means of achieving it, in our own personal experience. For it must, I think, be essentially akin to that state which we call 'happiness.' It is true that, especially in connexion with religion and theology, other names, such as 'blessedness,' 'beatitude,' or 'bliss,' have been given to the completely desirable and satisfying state; but if the meaning of these terms be analysed, it will be found difficult to invest them with any real meaning for us unless we regard them as names for a state of being which is the full development of what we glimpse in this life in our somewhat fragmentary experience of what we call 'happiness.'

I therefore believe that we should base our approach to the question of human conduct and ways of life on this idea of happiness, the nature of which I will consider in a moment, since all of us, probably without exception, have *some* concrete experience of happiness, and so are able to see meaning in an aim of existence which consists in the achievement of perfect happiness.

It will, no doubt, at once be asked whether such an approach to life implies the abandonment of religion as commonly understood. But the contrary is the case, as I shall try to show. What is implied, however, in a way of life based on happiness as the fundamental idea, is a new approach to the problems of religion, and new conceptions of values and morals. I shall consider these points in detail in later chapters, where I shall suggest that the new approach is such as to remove many of the difficulties associated with traditional problems concerning value, ethics, and moral responsibility.

But before proceeding farther let us consider the nature of happiness. Although, like all direct modes of experience, it is not easy to describe in words, it can, I think, be indicated with sufficient adequacy to make it recognizable by all who have experienced it in some degree. It has three main aspects, which are closely interwoven. They are:

- (1) A sense of inner harmony and freedom from strain (*not* effort) and conflict, inseparably accompanied by a sense of satisfactory adjustment to one's surroundings, physical and social.
- (2) The element of self-fulfilment through effort and activity—especially creative activity—in which it is felt that all one's abilities are being called into play.
- (3) Contemplative and appreciative attitudes of mind, often combined with a sense of relaxation.

Pleasure, joy, and contentment are all features of happiness, but none of them is identical with it. They may be, and often are, comparatively fleeting and transitory, while the state of happiness is one of comparative stability and permanence. Moreover, pleasure, for example, may be felt by individuals who could hardly be described as 'happy.' Thus some people take pleasure in inflicting cruelty, but I do not think an analysis of the whole state of mind of a sadist would lead to the conclusion that he was happy. On the contrary, it is known that sadism arises from the kind of perversion and mental conflict which is the negation of happiness. It is nevertheless true that pleasure and happiness are closely related, and it may be that perfect and enduring pleasure implies, and is implied by, perfect happiness.

At this point I must draw attention to one fact about happiness which is of the first importance. It is that human nature, and the conditions of human existence, are such that the happiness of each is bound up with the happiness of all. This is just an undoubted fact of actual experience about which there can be no argument. It is not possible for a person to attain to happiness, as

distinct from transitory pleasures, by pursuing it selfishly, ignoring the effect of his actions on the happiness of others. Our lives are so interwoven with, and dependent upon, one another that we cannot achieve happiness if other members of our community are in misery. It is therefore unnecessary to appeal to the existence of a 'moral law' (a point to which I shall return) to justify the exhortation to each that he should seek to ensure the happiness of others. It is simpler and more effective to draw attention to the plain fact, which experience itself has proved conclusively over and over again, that we can only progress towards the full achievement of our own happiness if at the same time we do our best to ensure the happiness of others. Moreover, in thus appealing to experience of observed facts, we are on far surer ground than if we base our arguments on a 'moral law,' or, indeed, in the first instance, on the idea of a God about whose existence and nature there have been endless disputes and differences of opinion of a kind which are meaningless in relation to observed matters of fact.

There is a further advantage in basing the principles of human conduct on an idea, that of 'happiness,' which is derived from direct experience. For experience is not only the source of the idea—it also gives some indication of the most effective ways of pursuing happiness, while future experiment—that is, controlled experience—provides a method of investigating practically the question as to which ways of individual and community life are most conducive to happiness. This will be discussed in relation to the various aspects of human life in the succeeding chapters.

It may be asked whether to make the attainment of happiness the main aim of life is not a selfish and ignoble aim. I cannot feel that this is so. As I have suggested, the attainment of a state of being essentially akin to the experience which we call 'happiness' seems to be the only intelligible kind of purpose of existence; and, moreover, as I have also pointed out, quite apart from moral or religious considerations, it is a matter of fact that the complete happiness of the individual implies, in the end, the happiness of



the whole community. It therefore follows logically from the very nature of spiritual beings that the effective pursuit of happiness must involve altruistic, and not merely egoistic, action.

There are two further points in this connexion to which attention should be drawn. The first is that a study of the great religions, and of the sayings of their chief exponents, makes it quite clear that, whatever the verbal imagery employed, the ultimate goal envisaged is a state of being supremely desirable for the individual as well as for the community of spirits as a whole. The second is the fact that, in the present state of the world, progress towards happiness almost inevitably involves a certain amount of suffering. This has, unfortunately, led to a tendency to glorify suffering for its own sake. This seems to me to be quite unjustifiable. Suffering is of no value *in itself*. On the contrary—and it is surely difficult to maintain that the achievement of happiness without suffering would be inferior to the achievement through suffering. The fact that happiness may now involve suffering is not an indication that suffering is something valuable, but is merely a symptom of the present imperfection of the world. It is true that there may be reasons why a stage during which suffering is experienced is necessary to the experience of *perfect* happiness—a point to which I shall return—but this is very different from saying that suffering is good in itself and ought to remain as a permanent feature of human experience.

I do not, of course, assert that the attainment of happiness is something which the individual should keep consciously and constantly before him. Such an attitude of mind might well defeat its own end. But I suggest that we should frame our general behaviour and our attitude towards life in accordance with the aim of achieving happiness, realizing fully that this involves working also for the happiness of others, and that, when called upon to make a decision involving conduct, we should adopt as our criterion the result likely to be reached in terms of the happiness of all concerned.

This brings me to a point which needs clearing up. This is

whether happiness can be regarded as quantitative—that is, as something which can be measured or estimated. Now it is clear that we cannot measure amount of happiness as we can measure (say) weight or length or temperature, or even as we can estimate amount of a mental quality such as ‘intelligence’ by means of a properly constructed test. On the other hand, it is equally clear that there is a significant sense in which we can speak of being more, or less, happy, and a varying degree of happiness is something of which we have immediate experience. But it is not possible to ‘measure’ or to describe amount of happiness in anything like precise terms. Nevertheless, when variations in happiness are sufficiently large we can be distinctly conscious of them even though we cannot describe them exactly. These facts must be borne in mind in forming an estimate of the condition of a community of human beings or in trying to decide on that line of conduct which will lead to the greatest happiness of all concerned. In spite of the difficulties I have mentioned, it may frequently be possible (and we should always try) to form a sufficiently close estimate in terms of happiness, if the differences involved are large enough to be of practical significance, and in such cases we shall be able to form an approximate idea of the state of the community or to make a sound choice as regards conduct.

We are led on naturally to consider the question of ‘progress.’ At this stage I shall define the ‘progress’ of a community as the increase in happiness of that community considered as a whole. This definition is, I think, a reasonable one in the present context. But the estimation of progress presents us with a difficult problem. Thus, for example, it would not be easy to maintain that, on balance, the amount of happiness in the world is greater than it was (say) three hundred years ago, and hence that we have made progress. What criterion are we to take in estimating progress as I have defined it? We have no direct knowledge of the experience of communities in the past, and so we cannot speak with any confidence about their happiness. Even in the

case of the contemporary world, the direct knowledge of each of us is limited to observation of the behaviour of those near to him and second-hand information about the behaviour of individuals and communities at a distance. From these sources of knowledge we may be able to form some rough idea of the general happiness, but it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to assess the extent to which it is increasing or decreasing.

I can think of only one criterion (an indirect one) which might provide a basis for estimating progress, and that is the degree of agreement in the world as a whole on the principles which should guide conduct. To take the extreme case, we can hardly suppose that all men would agree (I mean, of course, *freely* agree) as a result of their experience to live in accordance with principles which would lead to a decrease in happiness. I therefore suggest that we shall only be sure that we are making real progress—that is, that the general happiness is steadily increasing—when we can see a steady increase of agreement among men, the world over, on the principles which should determine the behaviour of individuals and, hence, the life of the community.

It is important to distinguish between the material and spiritual amenities which provide conditions favourable to the increase of happiness, and that inner state of mind which is the essential condition of progress towards the goal of perfect happiness. There is a tendency to concentrate too much on the former to the neglect of the latter, and this tendency is particularly noticeable when plans are on hand for reconstructing society and the conditions in which it exists. It is a real danger. It is most important, of course, that we should do everything possible to improve the conditions of life in all its aspects so as to provide an environment in which happiness can most readily flourish. I shall consider this in subsequent chapters. But we must never forget that a necessary condition of happiness, and the most important condition, is an attitude of mind in which we consciously determine to work to the best of our ability for the happiness of each and all, and, to that end, to draw fully

upon the knowledge provided by past experiences while being ready to experiment with alternative ways of life in the future.

I have maintained that the achievement of happiness is the only intelligible aim of human existence. I will now go further and assert that happiness is, in effect, what all human beings are actually seeking, though, through ignorance and mental and spiritual blindness, they generally adopt the wrong methods in trying to reach their goal. I base my assertion on the fact that observation of the behaviour of individuals seems to show that each is seeking something which will give him complete and lasting satisfaction. Such satisfaction is only to be found in—indeed it consists in—the state of happiness. Even the criminal or evildoer acts as he does because he believes, or hopes, that he will thereby obtain the full satisfaction for which his nature craves, though he may not himself refer explicitly to such satisfaction as ‘happiness.’ He fails, of course, in his quest because happiness cannot, in fact, be achieved through such things as selfishness, violence, dishonesty, and malice. But his failure drives him on ever more feverishly in the search for something which will satisfy him fully. A vicious circle tends to be established, for unhappiness itself conduces to actions which will only make it worse.

Wisdom might be defined as the knowledge of how to live in order to progress most effectively towards perfect happiness. I therefore suggest that wisdom is the basic quality which each of us should try to cultivate, and I should consider the wrongdoer as foolish or ignorant rather than as ‘evil.’ I shall examine the points here raised in the next two chapters, where I shall discuss the ideas of ‘good’ and ‘evil,’ on which there seems to me to have been some confusion.

I conclude that in order to justify the exhortation to live and act in a manner described by such adjectives as honest, industrious, generous, sympathetic, tolerant, unselfish, charitable, and so on it is unnecessary to appeal to external sanctions. The nature of these sanctions is, for most people, not a matter of

certain, or even approximate, knowledge, but of argument, doubt, and hypothesis. It is therefore simpler and more fundamental, and would, I believe, be far more effective, to appeal to the verdict of direct observation and experience that people whose conduct can be described by such adjectives as the above are obviously happier than those whose conduct would be described as dishonest, lazy, mean, harsh, bigoted, selfish, and malicious. I do not mean that conduct described by the latter is incompatible with pleasure of a transitory kind, but it is certainly incompatible with progress towards greater happiness.

I must not be regarded as maintaining that there is no relation between the means to happiness and, for example, the question of the existence and nature of God. This is a point to be dealt with later. What I *am* maintaining is that, in reasoning with one another, we are on much firmer ground if, in the first instance, we base our arguments regarding the principles which should guide human conduct on the actual facts of experience to which I have referred; and it seems to me to be more significant and effective to appeal to the fact that experience shows that, if you live in such and such a way you will be happier than if you live in certain other ways than to say that you should live in such and such a way because it is required by some external sanction.

No doubt most people would agree that, at any rate in present conditions, it is impossible for anyone to achieve *perfect* happiness in this life. This raises the question as to whether human existence has any meaning unless there is a future life for the individual, and hence the question whether we have any grounds for postulating such a future life. I must postpone consideration of these questions till the next chapter, but it may be in place here to consider briefly what meaning can be given to the idea of 'perfect' happiness. Such a state, which implies the existence in the individual, to the fullest possible degree, of the characteristics of happiness indicated at the beginning of this discussion, is so far beyond our present experience of happiness that it is difficult to form even an approximate idea of it except through

analogies. But I think we can say two things about it. First, that it is a state which is complete and desirable as an end in itself, and not simply as a means to further ends; and, therefore, second, that it is not merely a passive or stagnant state, but a state of activity. Now, those states of activity which, in our present experience, are most nearly ends in themselves are the creative and appreciative processes involved in the various forms of art and skill, using these terms in the widest sense, and in the development of personal relationships. We may therefore, perhaps, suppose that the state of perfect happiness consists in something analogous to the creation and the apprehension of those infinitely varying experience patterns which, at our present level, are manifested in such things as Art, Music, Literature, certain aspects of Science and of Mathematics, and personal relationships. We find in these, *for their own sake*, the pleasure, joy, harmony, and relaxation which are basic constituents of happiness.

I conclude, then, that in determining the principles of human conduct we should start from some form of experience which is common, in some degree, to all human beings. The last qualification is important, because some people believe that they have certain special types of experience—for example, ‘religious experience’—on which life ought to be based. But these types of experience are not common to all humanity, and even among those who have them there are wide differences—and, indeed, contradictions—in regard both to the nature of the experience and to the conclusions to be drawn from it. For reasons I have given, I believe that we should take happiness as the common form of experience on which to base our consideration of ways of life, and I regard the attainment of an increasing degree of happiness as the only intelligible aim of human existence. In subsequent chapters I shall apply these conclusions in a discussion of the various aspects of life.

## *Chapter II*

### *RELIGION*

I SHALL NOT attempt here the difficult task of defining precisely what religion is; but probably most people would agree that the religious man is one who believes in the existence of a supreme spiritual being in intimate relationship with the world in general, and with human beings in particular, and who strives to order his life accordingly. Opinions vary considerably among religious people as to the exact nature of this spiritual Being (usually called 'God') and of His relation to the world; but He is commonly regarded as personal (or something akin to personal) in nature, as benevolent (and beneficent), and as (in some sense) omnipotent, omniscient, and ubiquitous. All these ideas call for some comment; but, meantime, we might fairly say, I think, that religion is the attitude of mind, and the way of life, engendered in individuals by beliefs of the kind I have indicated.

Broadly speaking, there are five ways by which a man may come to religion of some kind—(1) family, or similar, custom; (2) unquestioning acceptance of authority; (3) special conditioning; (4) more or less sudden conversion; or (5) reasoned judgment. The first three of these overlap to some extent.

There is quite commonly a tendency in individuals when young to adopt, perhaps under compulsion, the religious observances of the families of which they are members. They may also adopt, according to their understanding, the religious beliefs of their families. This is merely a result of the environmental conditions in which they grow up, which leads them at first to accept the beliefs and practices of their elders as a matter of course before they reach the degree of experience and maturity required for independent judgment in such a difficult matter. The acceptance is, however, frequently superficial, in the absence

of other factors, such as a special process of conditioning, and there is often a reaction against it during the adolescent period.

As for the unquestioning acceptance of authority, some people may still find it easy or comforting to base their religious beliefs on authoritarian dogmatism, but, apart from the abdication of judgment involved in this, difficulties arise because the authorities of different religions or sects, speaking with equal assurance, offer beliefs which are incompatible with one another in some respects.

Some religious organizations, associated with various creeds in all parts of the world, adopt the method (by deliberate intent or by a continuance of tradition no longer based on conscious purpose) of subjecting those who come within their field of influence to a special process of psychological conditioning. The object of this is to ensure that the individuals concerned will accept the beliefs of the particular religious organization with a sense of complete conviction and certainty, and shape their lives accordingly. Adult minds which have previously been conditioned in this way can only think, in the specific field of the conditioning (in this case the field of religion) along certain lines. However independent in thought they may be in other connexions, in the religious field they are unable to bring to bear the free judgment and rational criticism of the unconstrained mind. Nor do they feel the impulse to such judgment and criticism, owing to the feeling of absolute certainty that their beliefs are true to which I have already referred. But this feeling of certainty is itself the product of the conditioning, and is therefore quite irrelevant to the truth of the beliefs held and sheds no light upon the latter.

Those who employ the conditioning method in a systematic way, by the continual suggestive effect on the mind of the repetition of certain religious rites and exercises, often defend this method by their own sense of certainty of truth, which they accordingly feel justified in imparting to others by any means, even of an irrational character. But their own convictions are



themselves the result of conditioning and the method is exposed for what it is by the fact that persons conditioned in conformity with different religions hold religious beliefs which are mutually incompatible, though in each case held with equal conviction and certainty. It requires an outside judgment, based on a reasoned consideration of the facts, to form a significant opinion of the relative merits of the conflicting beliefs.

The process of 'conversion,' which occurs from time to time in people of all ages, is commonly accompanied by marked emotional manifestations, and results in an often quite sudden radical change in the attitude towards life of the individual concerned and the fervent embracing by him of a particular set of religious beliefs. Unquestionably it often leads to immediate changes of a profound nature in the behaviour of the individual. But its long-term sequel seems to be quite uncertain. The emotional disturbance may give rise to a temporary instability which sometimes ends in a dissolution of the state of mind induced by the 'conversion' and, perhaps, a return to something like the original mental set of the individual, but sometimes settles down into a stable and relatively permanent condition embodying the changes brought about by the conversion. I shall not consider the matter further here, as the psychology of conversion has been thoroughly explored in technical works. There is indisputable evidence that the causes of conversion are many and various and, fundamentally, may sometimes not be of a religious character at all. In any case, the same difficulty arises here as in the other cases mentioned—namely, that the beliefs and the ways of life produced by conversion in different individuals often imply ultimate views about the nature of the Universe which are incompatible with one another.

There remains the approach to religion by way of reasoned judgment. It is often said that in religious matters one should trust one's 'heart' and not one's 'head,' and that religion should be a matter of faith and not of reason. This seems to me to be misleading, for we cannot escape the fact that the final appeal

must be to a rational judgment. It is not enough to state that we should be guided by faith. This statement must itself be justified, and that can only be through the dispassionate examination of the facts of experience in the light of reason. Unfortunately, too, there are so many different faiths, each claiming to be the true one.

I conclude, therefore, that the only way of approach to the problem of religion which is appropriate to the freedom and dignity of the human spirit is that which starts from facts of experience of which we are certain, and proceeds by reasoned judgment upon those facts. I hasten to add that every development of the individual is determined partly by the conditioning effect of the environment, including the impact of the words and actions of other people, but conditioning a person to preserve an open mind and an independent judgment is very different from conditioning him to blind acceptance of a specific set of beliefs and to mechanical adoption of a particular way of life.

I should like now to discuss the question of religion from the point of view I have just indicated. We must first consider the problems of the existence and nature of God. Here I would make, at the outset, a distinction between what I will call 'reasons for' the existence of some entity X and 'reasons for believing' that X exists. By the former I mean statements of whose truth we are certain from which the existence of X can be deduced by strict logic. By the latter I mean true statements of fact which cannot be shown logically to imply the existence of X, but which would be rendered much more intelligible to the human mind if X did in fact exist. Where there are no logical reasons for deciding whether X does or does not exist, although the question of this existence or non-existence is of great importance to us, I regard it as valid to assume, and to act upon the assumption, that X exists, if the assumption of X's existence makes the Universe, as known through our experience, more intelligible to us than does the assumption of X's non-existence.

Now I believe that, from the very nature of the case, it is not

possible to produce conclusive reasons for the existence of God, that is to deduce His existence logically from known facts. We have therefore to consider whether there are any reasons for believing that He exists, and, if so, whether any of these reasons approximate to logical reasons for His existence.

But I would first point out that it is also impossible to prove logically that God does *not* exist, and I will consider briefly such reasons as have been advanced against His existence. These are usually put forward by scientists or by people of a scientific turn of mind. Fifty years ago the physicists were the loudest in proclaiming the non-existence of God. To-day it is the biologists (and sometimes the psychologists) who take the lead in this respect. If they do not boldly assert that God does not exist they tend to say, in effect, that the discoveries of physics, biology, and psychology make the assumption of the existence of God unnecessary to explain the Universe. This seems to me to be both unfortunate and untrue—unfortunate because the deservedly high reputation of the scientists in question in the fields in which they are expert gives a spurious weight to their pronouncements in fields in which they have not the same competence; untrue because science does not ‘explain’ anything, but merely describes in a systematic, convenient, and often highly condensed and abstract manner the way in which events take place. But it does not explain why events take place in this way. This has long been recognized by students of the philosophy of science. It follows that the propositions of science are irrelevant to the question of the existence or non-existence of God—they are certainly not incompatible with His existence.

I will make a short digression here to discuss briefly the bearing of these considerations on such questions as the occurrence of miracles. A miracle is simply a very rare, or even, up to the date of its occurrence, unique sequence of events. But there is nothing impossible about it. Science describes the normal sequences of events, but it does not, and cannot, establish the impossibility of exceptions to these normal sequences. Indeed, its

own discoveries make possible the production, in any age, of groups and sequences of events which, in preceding ages, would have been considered to be miracles. It is only necessary to mention, in this connexion, the discovery of such a thing, for example, as the possibility of radio communication. Knowledge of the universe can never be exhaustive, and the occurrence of so-called miracles is simply the manifestation of this fact. 'Miracle' is, in fact, a relative term—relative to the then existing knowledge—and the occurrence of such a phenomenon merely renders it necessary to modify the statements of observed fact in which that knowledge is expressed.

We come now to the positive side of the inquiry—namely, as to what, if any, are the reasons for believing in the existence of God. I think there are sound reasons for this belief, but the full analysis of the problem, and its allied problems, is a matter of considerable metaphysical complexity, and would be out of place in this book, though I have attempted it elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Here I shall confine myself to stating, as briefly and clearly as I can, the main line of my argument.

There are, I think, valid reasons for holding that the universe is fundamentally spiritual in nature—and by 'spirits' I mean those centrally organized systems or structures of experience of all kinds, of the nature of which each of us is immediately aware through his own existence. Spirits are, of course, of various degrees of development, both in the case of human beings of differing ages and types, and in the wider universe which includes the human race as one example of spiritual development. Spirit is traditionally distinguished, in particular, from 'matter,' which was formerly supposed to consist of mindless particles, conceived in different ways at different scientific epochs, existing independently of us, but is now known to be an abstract term signifying certain broad aspects of our experience.

As each of us has certain knowledge of the existence of spiritual beings—or, more strictly, of one spiritual being—

<sup>1</sup> See *Happiness, Freedom, and God*, Chapters V and VI.

through his awareness of his own existence, it is clearly reasonable to inquire whether the universe, so far as we are acquainted with it, can be made most intelligible to us on the hypothesis that all existence is spiritual in nature. I believe the answer is that it can, as I have tried to show elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> But here I will only point out that it seems very difficult (indeed, I believe it to be impossible) to give any meaning to the idea of a concrete or substantial existence which is not spiritual in nature. I cannot imagine anything existing as a concrete entity which has no kind of being for itself but is operative only in effects upon other beings. This position, which has sometimes been summarized by the statement that nothing has being in itself unless it has being *for* itself, is very far from a new one, but I have never come across an effective refutation of it. Spiritual being, which is essentially being-for-self, is therefore, I think, the only type of being which can properly be termed 'substance' in the traditional metaphysical sense; and I shall now proceed on the assumption that there are sound reasons for regarding the universe as fundamentally spiritual in nature.

I have said that, strictly, each of us can be sure of the existence of only one entity—himself. By that I mean that it is not possible for anyone to prove logically to himself that anyone else exists—his experience might be something like a particularly vivid dream. But, in practice, we find it impossible not to believe in the existence of other entities, and this belief certainly makes our experience much more intelligible to us.

As soon as we assume the existence of other entities, however, we are confronted by a crucial point. For it is clear that, although there are a very large number of such beings, they do not form a mere collection of isolated units separate from one another and with no concrete relations among themselves. On the contrary, the many individuals composing the world are so closely and substantially interrelated with one another that they are welded into an organic unity of existence.

<sup>1</sup> See *Spiritual Pluralism*.

This obvious unity, which brings the plurality and diversity of the world into a coherent system, requires the existence of some substantial ground to make it intelligible. Such a ground can, I think, only be found in the existence of a being who is in the closest relationship to the many finite beings, and through whom the latter interact with one another. Just as the existence of many finite beings is the ground of the plurality and diversity observable in the universe, so must the existence of some unique or supreme Being provide the ground of the observable unity of the universe. This Being transcends the many in that it is not merely identical with them; but it is also immanent in them in so far as it welds them into a unity and is the ground of their interaction. I do not pretend that this dual relation of transcendence and immanence is easy to imagine. Like all ultimate facts it can only be indicated, and not described or conceived precisely. But we experience something analogous to it in, for example, the relation of mind and body. The mind is distinct from, and thus transcends, the body; but, at the same time, the mind is present in the body in a particularly intimate way and unifies the activities of the body. This is, of course, only an analogy, which must not be pressed too far.

It is, I think, clear that the One Being cannot be a mere abstraction but must be a substantial existent. For reasons I have given it must therefore be regarded as spiritual in nature. It is what we call 'God.'

If God is immanent in the world, and so in the closest rapport with all the individuals composing it, He will, in a very real sense, share in the experience of all of us. His experience will be a synthesis of experience from, so to speak, our points of view with experience from His own point of view as distinct from and transcending us. It follows that He must be regarded, not only as spiritual, but also as personal in nature, and I shall later give reasons which seem to me to reinforce this conclusion.

The immanence of God gives point to the description of Him as 'ubiquitous' and 'omniscient.' He is present everywhere, not

in the crude spatial sense, which is not applicable in this connexion, as we shall presently see, but in the sense of intimate relationship, and shared experience, with all other beings; and He knows everything, for while, as transcendent, He perceives reality from a 'universal' point of view, as immanent he perceives it from the many points of view of finite beings. We must suppose the unique feature of God's experience to be the synthesis of the universal and the individual aspects of experience of all kinds, whether sense, imagination, thought, feeling, emotion, or volition.

There remains the question as to whether God can be considered to be omnipotent and benevolent. This question involves the problems of Freedom and Evil. I cannot here attempt a full philosophical analysis of these problems,<sup>1</sup> but I will try to indicate the conclusions to which such an analysis seems to me to lead.

I think the only meaning that can be given to 'freedom' of the individual is that his actions are determined, not solely by the nature of beings other than himself, but partly by his own nature. It is clear that a person's actions are influenced by factors other than himself. But it is equally clear that this is not all—his actions are in fact the joint product of his own nature and that of his environment, including his body, using the term 'environment' in the widest sense. To the extent that his actions are self-determined he is free. This freedom is not purely anarchic or chaotic—it would be absurd to say that a man could not be free unless his actions were not determined by anything, even his own nature. A man acts in such-and-such a way partly because he is what he is. Moreover, every individual is *unique* in the sense that he cannot be *completely* described by general statements. There is always an ultimate factor particular to the individual which makes it impossible to predict his actions in a given situation with certainty. It is in this uniqueness that the freedom of self-determination consists.

<sup>1</sup> See *Happiness, Freedom, and God*, Chapters IV, V, and VI.

Now in a world consisting of many free individuals related among themselves and to one particular Being (God) in the way I have indicated it seems unlikely that harmony will reign eternally. Conflict will occur in the interactions of the Many, and in their interaction, as individuals, with the One. At the same time it is reasonable to suppose that the continued directive influence of God, arising from His immanence, will result, on the average, in a steady tendency to progressive harmony, whatever fluctuations there may be. In brief, God's purposes are necessarily realized, and in this sense and to this extent He is omnipotent, but the nature of the process of their realization depends on us as well as on Him.

I think there is some evidence for this view in the fact that things generally regarded as evil in themselves so often lead, in spite of themselves as it were, to results which are good. War is perhaps the most striking example of this. The accompaniments of war are the cause of great misery to mankind, and yet from war there frequently emerge changes of a beneficent kind, and changes which occur unusually rapidly. To the dispassionate observer there is apparent the operation of forces which are, in their origin, beyond the conscious control of men, and which act beneficently in spite of the miserable conflict of human wills and desires which provides their setting.

I have been using the terms 'good' and 'evil' as commonly understood, though I believe the common usage to be philosophically unsound. These terms are usually applied to persons or actions. But I think that they should really be applied, not to persons or actions, but to the active relations between persons, or between finite persons and God. Where harmony of action exists there is good; where conflict of action exists there is evil. The good which consists in harmony of action (that is, co-operation) is experienced by the individuals concerned as happiness; the evil which consists in conflict is experienced as misery, and God shares in these experiences. I should define 'good' and 'evil' respectively as this harmony and conflict.



I therefore conclude that the statement "God is good" is really meaningless. But this conclusion is not so stark as it sounds. For instead of saying that God is benevolent because He desires our happiness, I would say rather that it necessarily follows from the very nature of God and His relations to us that development must ultimately be away from conflict and towards harmonious co-operation among ourselves and with God, each being essential to the other, and therefore away from the experience of misery towards the experience of happiness. Such considerations seem to me to provide a far more convincing guarantee of ultimate happiness than any possible conclusions based on the idea that God is an all-powerful Being, independent of us, who might or might not have wished to ensure our happiness.

It follows for similar reasons that we should regard the 'love of God' for us, not as the feeling for us of a being independent of us, but as consisting in the fact of shared experience and the consequent interdependence of the happiness of ourselves and of God. No doubt one element in such happiness is the experience of that tenderness which is an essential element in the experience called 'love,' but the basis of this should be realized for what it is, and not emotionalized and sentimentalized.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the problem of Evil arises from the fact that the world consists of many individuals, and in such a world there is bound to be conflict. For conflict (that is, evil) would only be impossible in a world in which the natures of all individuals but one were completely determined by the nature of that one. But the others would not then be individuals, for, as I have pointed out, individual existence consists in being in and for self and is necessarily unique and not entirely determined by things other than itself. A being completely determined 'from outside' could not have substantial existence. There is, I think, no incompatibility between 'evil' and the 'omnipotence' and 'benevolence' of God if these terms are interpreted in the way I have attempted.

The manner in which the various processes observable in the world, at all levels 'animate' and 'inanimate,' interlock with one another in an orderly and (often) apparently purposive way, together with the fact, already referred to, that from activities which in themselves give rise to misery there frequently result large-scale developments of a kind tending towards an increase of happiness, gives some evidence of the existence in the universe of a purpose beyond the limited and local aims of finite beings. This and the existence of an almost universal impulse towards religion and the belief in a supreme power have often been urged as arguments in favour of the existence of God. I do not think much weight can be attached to such arguments by themselves, for appearances may be illusory. But, taken in conjunction with the reasons for believing in God's existence which I have already advanced, they have considerable force. For if the argument should be well founded, so that God does in fact exist, the prevalence of order and purpose and the existence of a universal plan tending towards increasing harmony, and therefore happiness, together with the innate sense, in human beings, of relationship with a divine Power, are just the kind of things we might expect. They therefore provide important confirmatory evidence for the conclusion that God exists which has been reached by an argument which is philosophically of a more fundamental type. As I have pointed out this argument is not logically decisive in a complete sense, but it does not, I think, fall far short of this, and it therefore provides strong reasons for believing that God exists. With the supplementary arguments that I have just noted, it provides full justification for living and acting on the assumption of God's existence rather than on that of His non-existence.

Such an acceptance, *on the basis of reasoned judgment*, of an ultimate conclusion determining one's philosophy of life in a fundamental way—a conclusion which cannot logically be proved to be true—seems to me to be the only significant and worthwhile kind of faith. Faith consisting in the blind acceptance

of authoritarian pronouncements, or of comforting beliefs, is not enough. Merely to exhort those who feel doubts and difficulties to 'have faith in God' is indefensible and ineffective. For why should we have faith in the existence and the 'benevolence' of a supreme Being just because some people (even many people) believe this to be a fact? We cannot simply be asked to have faith unless some sound justification is provided for having faith, and this can only be provided by reasoned judgment of the alternatives—neither of which can be shown conclusively to be true—in the light of all the facts. But if sound reasons can be adduced for believing in the existence and 'benevolence' of God, as I have tried to show they can, we are fully justified in embracing this belief with all that it implies concerning our present life and our future prospects.

There is another point which we may now consider—namely, that the belief in the existence, rather than the non-existence, of God is conducive in the case of most, and probably, in the final reckoning, of all people to greater happiness. The reason for this is obvious, though by itself it is, of course, no justification whatever for belief in the existence of God. But, added to the reasons in favour of this belief already considered, it is, I think, decisive.

It may be appropriate here to refer briefly to two other questions which arise in this connexion—namely, those concerned respectively with Immortality and with Creation. The difficulties generally felt regarding these problems seem to me to arise from misunderstanding as to the nature of Time. The investigation of the latter is peculiarly difficult and complex, and all I can do here is to indicate my own conclusions.

Baldly I should say that the difficulties arise from regarding Time as something independent of us 'in' which we exist, whereas Time is really something in us. I have pointed out that spiritual beings, as we immediately realize from the nature of our own existence, are centrally organized systems of experience—centrally organized because they are in each case experiences.

as we say, 'of' some particular individual. Now the elements of which these systems are composed exhibit various qualities and relations among themselves, some of which are of a particular type to which we give the name 'temporal.' 'Time' is an abstraction from these temporal qualities and relations, and is therefore a name for one of the broad aspects of our experience. The point I wish to make, then, is that the experience-systems which constitute spiritual beings do not exist in a Time which is external to them; on the contrary, Time (or temporality) is something *within* them.

It follows that the idea of God as existing *before* finite beings and *afterwards* creating them is meaningless. There is no problem of Creation, for the idea of Creation in connexion with the relation between God and finite beings has no significance. This relation is, as I have suggested, the dual one of transcendence and immanence of the kind already considered, and is non-temporal in nature.

For similar reasons, if the problem of Immortality is put in the form 'Do spiritual beings like ourselves exist for ever?' it also is meaningless, for the question implies the existence of Time as something external to us. On the other hand, it is quite significant to ask whether the complete experience-system that constitutes a spiritual being contains elements which would constitute a life other than ordinary bodily life, and would be so related to the other elements *within* the particular experience-system as to be regarded as coming 'after' the elements which make up bodily life. This is the problem of 'survival,' and there are two kinds of evidence to be considered in connexion with it.

The first kind of evidence is of an empirical character. It arises out of the investigation of facts relevant to the issue which are of a kind open to direct observation—such facts as are dealt with, for example, in "psychical research." For a full discussion of this kind of evidence I may perhaps refer any interested reader to the work already quoted.<sup>1</sup> Here I will only record my belief

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Happiness, Freedom, and God*, Chapter IV.

that it tends to support the conclusion that 'survival,' in the sense I have defined it, is a fact.

The other kind of evidence is of an indirect character—namely, whether the belief in survival renders our experience more intelligible to us. Probably most people would agree that it does. If there is nothing in our experience except what is associated with bodily life existence would seem to be pointless, incomplete, and incomprehensible, and certainly incompatible with those beliefs concerning God and the world which I have given reasons for holding. Hence, although it may not be possible to prove logically that 'survival' is a fact, there are sound reasons for believing in it.

It is, perhaps, worth pointing out that much of what I have said about Time applies also to Space. We are not in Space, conceived as something external to, and independent of, us; Space is in us. Actually, of course, those broad aspects of experience called Space and Time respectively are so inextricably bound up with one another as to be strictly inseparable—each is, in fact, but one aspect of a more fundamental element in experience called "Space-Time." But we cannot pursue this point further.<sup>1</sup>

For the reasons given in my first chapter I believe that, in determining our way of life, we should start from facts of which we are certain, and that these facts lead to 'happiness' as the key concept in this connexion. The conduct of human beings should therefore be such as experience and experiment show to be the most likely to lead to an increase in the general happiness. But the conclusions reached in the present chapter give a wider significance to this point of view, and seem to me to provide a philosophy which is complementary to the empirical reasons for accepting the idea of happiness as our guide. This philosophy brings out, on the one hand, the real meaning and ground of happiness, while, on the other, it may well be itself a source of increased happiness to those who accept it.

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller discussion of Space-Time see *Happiness, Freedom, and God* Chapter III.

I will now pass on from the discussion of the basis of religion to a more detailed consideration of religion itself. I shall consider it under three aspects—namely, (1) personal or individual; (2) communal; and (3) organized religion.

The last two must be carefully distinguished. By 'communal' religion I mean the practice of religious activities by groups of people; whereas by 'organized' religion I mean, on the one hand, the welding of these activities into systematic routine and ritual, and, on the other, the establishment of corporate institutions in association with which the activities are carried on. These two aspects of organized religion are closely connected.

There are two sides to personal religion—namely, the effect on the general life of the individual of his religious beliefs and behaviour arising from his sense of relationship with God.

So far as the first of these is concerned, anyone who accepted some such philosophy as I have been outlining would find his endeavours to bring about an increase in the happiness of the community, including himself, reinforced by the holding of beliefs which render intelligible the significance of happiness and justify the search for the latter, not only on empirical grounds, but also through well-based beliefs about the nature of the Universe. The whole life of such an individual, and his attitude of mind, would be governed by the impulse to co-operation with his fellows and with God in bringing about a progressive elimination from the world of the causes of conflict and, partly as a result of this, a steady increase in harmonious interaction which would be experienced by all as a growth in happiness.

On the other hand, the sense of relationship with God is involved in what is commonly termed 'prayer' or 'communion.' The idea of prayer as a petition for benefits, or for special attention or protection, seems indefensible. But if the relation of God to the world is such as I have suggested the process of communion, through God's immanence, becomes comprehensible and significant. The individual who, from time to time, deliber-

ately adopts a reflective and receptive attitude of mind, surrendering himself to the influence of the universal power, would then be justified in anticipating a form of experience which, though perhaps not defined with complete clearness, would result in reinforcement of faith, refreshment of spirit, and growth in intuitive wisdom. Wisdom would grow, in fact, not only through rational judgment on what is observed in normal experience, but also through what is apprehended in communion with God.

The truth of what I have just said must itself be tested by experience. I have given reasons for believing that there is a God, and that communion with him is an intelligible process. The man who adopts this belief as his faith, and deliberately seeks communion with God, will be able to judge from his own experience whether the results are such as his belief would lead him to expect. In such a case reason and faith reinforce one another.

Communal religion is associated very largely with the ideas of praise, glorification, and prayer or communion. So far as the last of these is concerned I do not think there is much that need be added to what I have already said in connexion with personal religion. It is a fact that some (and probably most) human beings find it a refreshment and inspiration to gather in groups from time to time for quiet communion with God. This is quite understandable in view of the close ties which unite the individuals composing the world. I would only suggest that such communion should be guided by the principles I have already indicated.

Difficulties seem to arise, however, in regard to glorification and praise. These ideas apparently originated in the practice of the homage which was traditionally paid to earthly kings and rulers. No doubt the latter derived much pleasure from such a stimulus to their self-esteem and such an evidence of their power over their fellows. But the practices, which would no longer be acceptable to human beings at a high level or, indeed, defensible, if they ever were, seem the more inappropriate and indefensible in relation to God. It is hardly conceivable that a being such as

God is supposed to be would require, or derive pleasure from, continual loud assurances of his excellent qualities. This would imply that God was characterized by one of the more childish forms of human weakness.

Nevertheless there is, in the religious field, as in most other fields of human life, an important part for great prose and verse, music, and colour. But I suggest that the approach to them should be different from what is customary. They should be regarded as providing the occasion, not so much for the praise or glorification of God, but for creating and sharing in those forms of beauty which, through the joy and pleasure they cause, are vitally instrumental to human happiness. In this connexion the production of beauty is an experience which should be considered as shared by groups of human beings among themselves, and also with God himself. I think that this indicates the kind of relationship to God in which the activities we are considering should be regarded as standing, instead of what really amounts to little more than a form of adulation which is foreign to the whole conception of God. The kind of material employed should naturally be appropriate to the religious situation, just as, on other occasions, it is appropriate to the particular field of human experience concerned.

There are two further points to consider here. The first is that it is naturally reasonable to provide suitable buildings for religious activities just as we provide suitable buildings for other kinds of human activity. The second is that clearly some degree of organization is necessary to provide the opportunity for communal religious activity.

This raises the whole question of organization in connexion with religion. I cannot help feeling that, in general, the idea of organization is antithetic to something which is so essentially personal and spontaneous as true religion. I therefore suggest that the organizing of communal religious activities ought to be reduced to the minimum possible. It might consist in only such routine arrangements as are absolutely necessary to provide for



the desires of those who wish to join with a group of their fellows in communal religion. I would submit further that such a principle is in full accord with the spirit of the Christian religion, as expounded by its Founder, which was peculiarly simple, though profound. It implies the conception of communal religion, as companionship and shared experience with God and our fellows in the creation of experience-patterns which are beautiful and satisfying to the spirit.

All things considered, it seems reasonable to suppose that the chief conditions necessary to the full and fruitful development of religion in a community are that the everyday life of religious leaders should be clearly seen to be in no respects incompatible with the principles they profess, while adult practising members of religious groups should strive to keep their conduct free from faults—including petty faults—contrary to the spirit of true religion; that religious practice should be as simple as possible, routine and ritual being reduced to the minimum essential to a necessary degree of order, while sectarian wrangling over points which seem unimportant compared with simple fundamentals should be avoided; that religion should not be over-emotionalized or sentimentalized, or caused to be associated in people's minds with the idea of their being 'got at' to secure their adherence to particular religious beliefs or practices; and, finally, that all religious and ethical terms and ideas should be linked fundamentally to the concrete experience of the individuals concerned.

It may be felt that the suggested rational approach to religion is a chill and comfortless thing, holding out little promise of sustenance and sympathy to human beings. This is not so; for while I think a religion based on anything but reasoned judgment is of little worth, once the judgment has been made, and the faith implied by it accepted, the resulting experience will, *if the judgment be true*, of necessity involve all those elements, including tenderness and sympathetic understanding (but *not* sentimentality and emotionalism), from which the soul draws inspiration, hope, and comfort.

I have suggested that the formulation and acceptance of fundamental beliefs and principles of living should be linked throughout to the actual experience of those concerned. It is this consideration which leads me to urge that we should make the idea of 'happiness' the *primary* concept in approaching questions of ethics and religion. This is by no means to say, of course, that happiness is the most *fundamental* concept spiritually or philosophically. We must distinguish between what is logically prior and what is psychologically prior.

While for Christian theism, and, indeed, for most other religions, the idea of God is no doubt logically and metaphysically prior, I believe that, for the mass of human beings, the idea of happiness is psychologically prior; and the more undeveloped and immature the individual the truer this is. We make a mistake, I think, in inverting this order in our approach to ethics and religion.

Happiness means something to every individual who has attained some degree of self-consciousness, for it is something which is actually experienced directly; and it is clearly apparent from experience that a person's happiness depends to a considerable extent on the behaviour of others. From this it immediately follows that the happiness of others depends also on him. If the realization of this is combined with the idea of God as a person to whom we can turn for guidance, and in whom we can feel permanent confidence and find ultimate security, and as one who, by the very nature of his relation to the world, loves us and wishes to lead us to happiness, a purpose in which we can help by working together for the happiness of one another, I feel that we have the simplest and most effective basis for an ethical and religious approach to life, whatever the age or level of development of the individual concerned.

Here I will conclude my discussion of religion. In this chapter I have tried to relate the problems involved to the philosophy of life developed in my first chapter. In the next chapter I shall try to relate the latter to the problems of Value and Morals.

### *Chapter III*

## *VALUE AND MORALS*

THE TRADITIONAL values are those associated with what are termed respectively Beauty, Truth, and Goodness. I will adopt this nomenclature for convenience, and it is not my purpose here to analyse the three concepts involved; but I would remind the reader of what I said in the last chapter regarding the nature of the 'good.'

The main argument which has always arisen in connexion with values is whether the latter are objective—that is, something which characterizes the objects concerned independently of their relation to any sentient beings—or subjective—that is, dependent, at any rate in part, on the relation of objects to conscious individuals.

I will say at once that the objective theory of value seems to me to be indefensible, and I have never come across any argument for it which seemed at all convincing or difficult to refute. I base my position with regard to this on the belief that there could be no such thing as value in a mindless world. Even if such a world—a world entirely devoid of spiritual beings—could be imagined to exist at all, and I have given reasons for doubting this, I cannot see that the idea of value would have any meaning in relation to it. Value is essentially value *for* minds or spiritual beings; it connotes something which such beings find desirable.

I have developed this point in detail elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> and the argument leads to the conclusion that value is really something which characterizes certain states of mind. I suggest that it consists in happiness, and that happiness is the one and only value. I believe that it is possible, on this basis, to frame a consistent

<sup>1</sup> See *Happiness, Freedom, and God*, Chapter II.

theory and to resolve certain difficulties and contradictions which commonly arise in discussions about value.

I should say that in, for example, the contemplation of a beautiful object what is really valued is the state of mind produced in the beholder, according to the contribution which this makes to the latter's happiness, and I believe this is confirmed by reflection. The difficulties found in trying to determine distinctions between different kinds of value do not then arise. In particular, the necessity for distinguishing between what have usually been called 'intrinsic' and 'instrumental' values respectively, is avoided. Some things have been regarded as having value in themselves, whatever this might mean, and are then said to have 'intrinsic' value. Other things, while not considered as having value in themselves, contribute to the production of something else which has intrinsic value, and are then said to have 'instrumental' value. But, on my theory, happiness is the only value and things which are conducive to happiness would not themselves be said to have value, whether intrinsic or instrumental, though they might be correctly described as instrumental *to* value, that is to happiness.

Great difficulties arise in connexion with questions of 'taste' or standards of value, owing to the very wide range of opinion in such matters. On the objective theory of value there would exist standards, independent of any particular individual, by which actual values should be judged and compared. But to assert the existence of such independent objective standards is to make an assumption for which it is difficult to produce any very cogent evidence. Even if such standards did exist how would they be known? The only possible reply seems to be that they are, in fact, known by certain people. If they were known by nobody the assertion of their existence would be without significance. On the other hand, if they are alleged to be known by certain people we really have no evidence at all that the beliefs of these people are anything more than their personal opinions based on their own likes and dislikes—opinions which

cannot be shown to be truths describing something objective and independent of them or anyone else.

Two related problems arise then, as regards matters of taste and standard, namely as to whose opinion is to be regarded as authoritative, and whether there is any way of giving practical significance to opinions on these matters and of comparing the validities of differing opinions.

I will consider these problems as they are illustrated in the realm of music, for the latter readily lends itself to this purpose; but what I have to say applies in principle equally to other realms of art and conduct.

No doubt it would commonly be said that, in matters of musical taste and standard, we should accept as authoritative the opinions of people with a certain type of bent, experience, and training—namely, composers, musicians, and musical critics. Even among such a limited group opinions differ quite widely, but I will ignore this and only take into account those points, and there are many of them, in which there is substantial agreement within the group. Nevertheless, I cannot see how the claim of such a group to general validity for their pronouncements can be sustained. Their opinions are what they are partly because of the kind of training they have had; the latter does not, in itself, make those opinions generally valid. What criterion is operating beyond the personal likes and dislikes on which the opinions are based? And on what grounds, ultimately, are these likes and dislikes to be put above those of other people? In short, ought we not in every case to take account of the particular individual concerned, and to regard the 'taste' and the standards of the trained musician as relative to his particular nature and circumstances, and not necessarily as of universal validity?

It is of interest in this connexion to compare, for example, a Bach fugue and a Strauss waltz. On musical merit the experts would certainly put the former higher—probably much higher—but the latter undoubtedly has a considerably wider appeal. Survival in time is a criterion sometimes put forward as the

measure of the greatness of a work. In the end this is a subjective criterion, depending on the stability or variability of taste. In any case the Strauss waltz passes this test well. After a hundred years its appeal is certainly as great as ever, and it could not, on this ground alone, be regarded as inferior to the Bach fugue.

I believe the particular difficulty here involved, and many other difficulties, can only be resolved if we relate value to the individual person and not to some supposed independent and objective standard which is disclosed, even dimly, only to a select few. I see no reason why, for certain individuals and in certain situations, the waltz should not be just as instrumental to value as the fugue. On the view I am advocating, a work of art, or a line of conduct, would be assessed on the contribution it makes to the happiness of individuals and of the community. In the case of the example I have taken it might no doubt be argued that if the community as a whole could be so trained as to prefer music of the fugue type to music of the waltz type it would ultimately make for greater happiness. This may or may not be true, but it cannot be accepted without proof. It would, however, provide a minor example of that planned experiment which, taken in conjunction with the fruits of past experience, I have suggested should form the basis for determining the types of human activity that are conducive to progress.

While, as a result of experience and experiment, it is probable that many things which are extremely popular would be rejected as inferior, even at our present level, I think the survivals which would have to be regarded as of broadly equal orders of merit would comprise a wide variety of types, including many which are looked down upon by experts or (so-called) 'highbrows'—always assuming that account is taken, as it certainly should be, of the situations and the individuals concerned. I cannot help feeling that the most fortunate people are those of catholic tastes who are able to derive happiness from a great variety of experiences, according to the circumstances, and who are correspondingly tolerant of the tastes, opinions and conduct of others.

I believe that such people make the greatest contribution in the end to the progress of the whole community towards greater happiness, for their personalities become enriched and developed in a particularly high degree and the scope of their influence is in proportion to this.

I conclude that the authoritarian view in regard to standards of value, or, more correctly, of those things which are instrumental to the one true value—happiness—is not well founded, whether the ‘authority’ is conceived as a certain person or special group of persons, or as an objective scale or sanction subsisting in some sense independently of the individuals constituting the substance of the world. As against this view I would hold that questions of standard should always be related to the individuals and the situations involved, and that the ultimate criterion should be the contribution which is made to the happiness of all concerned. We may, of course, be mistaken in the judgments we make, especially the *a priori* judgments, in relation to this criterion, but that can be progressively corrected by experience and experiment. Moreover standards will, and should, change with developments in the community of individuals. But here, as in the wider field, we might regard progress in knowledge and conduct as commensurate with the degree of over-all agreement on standards—that is, on the principles which should apply to the various fields of activity and experience if the greatest contribution towards the attainment of value (that is, of happiness) is to be secured.

Let us pass to some consideration of the general philosophy of morals. So far as the purely ethical side is concerned, and the principles which should govern conduct, I have indicated in the first chapter, and, directly or indirectly, in the previous part of this chapter, the kind of approach to these questions I would advocate. It is based on the ideas of happiness and wisdom—that is, knowledge of how to achieve happiness—as key concepts. The approach was primarily empirical, but in the second chapter I developed a view of religion which seems to me to

provide a sound philosophical basis for the theory of value and ethics which I hold. Here I am mainly concerned with what is generally known as "moral responsibility."

The operative word in connexion with the idea of moral responsibility is 'ought.' We are told that we 'ought' to live and behave in such and such a way, and to follow certain lines of conduct in particular situations. This imperative is considered to be based ultimately on sanctions which are external to and independent of us; and our nature and our relations to the rest of the universe are held to be such that there is an inescapable obligation on us to act under the governance of these sanctions, an obligation which we are potentially capable of fulfilling. This is what is meant by saying that we are 'morally responsible' beings.

Let us examine these ideas. In the first place, we have to ask just what are the sanctions in question. Although the precise names attached to them may vary, I think that the sanctions generally assumed fall broadly under two headings which might be called 'the Will of God' and 'the moral law.' One or both of these sanctions is regarded as operative according to the particular philosophy or religion concerned. I will consider them in turn.

It may be said that we ought to act in a certain way because it is the Will of God. Clearly this assumes that God is a benevolent being, for it could hardly be asserted that we ought to act in accordance with the will of a being who is malevolent—that is, desires pain and misery for us. But if God is benevolent His Will is such as to make for our happiness. Therefore the *practical* significance of the statement that we ought to act thus because it is the Will of God is that if we do act thus it will lead to an increase in our happiness—ultimately the happiness of the individual and the group. But growth of happiness, or the reverse, is a matter of practical experience, so that we come back to the fact that certain modes of action make for happiness while certain others make for unhappiness. Actual experience thus takes the place of hypothetical sanction.



But it may be objected that experience and experiment in this connexion cannot give us long-range prediction, and that actions whose immediate consequences are painful for us may sometimes lead ultimately to greater happiness, so that God wills temporary pain for us in order that happiness may come. Now it is true that we cannot judge by their *immediate* results the ultimate effects on happiness of our actions. But it seems reasonable to suppose that the range of experience within the lifetime of an individual, supplemented by planned experiment together with our knowledge of the past experience of mankind, so far as we can interpret it, should provide sufficient data for sound judgment in this matter. If this is not so—if the whole of human experience to date really provides no adequate guidance to action leading to happiness—then existence is indeed meaningless, and, as a consequence, anything like the usual conception of God goes by the board.

Moreover, another difficulty is here brought to a head, a difficulty which some may have felt already. How can the Will of God be known? Two replies are given. It may be said that God's Will is revealed in the pronouncements of certain special individuals. But unless we are prepared to accept blindly the *dicta* of those who are alleged to have been vouchsafed a special revelation, this does not get us any farther. It is true that, for many people, Christ would hold a unique position in this connexion. Nevertheless, I suggest that the sayings of Christ, no matter what their exact phraseology, should be put to the test of experience. Indeed, it has always seemed to me that the real message of Christianity, as expounded by its Founder, is a challenge to put to the test a certain way of life and not a set of theological dogmas—and the only test which is finally intelligible is the effect on happiness.

On the other hand, it may be said that the Will of God is revealed to each individual by some kind of inner feeling or sense of 'right' and 'wrong,' which is often called 'conscience.' Now it is a matter of fact that such a feeling exists in human

beings. But its existence does not in itself provide any evidence that it is a revelation of God's Will. Indeed, the pronouncements of conscience can often be traced to causes which it is difficult to regard as manifestations of God's revelation. Moreover, these pronouncements lead different people to very different, and often incompatible, conceptions of the Will of God. In short, the only defensible argument that can be advanced for acting in accordance with the 'inner voice' is that in doing so one avoids or removes the strains and conflicts which would otherwise occur and diminish happiness. Whether or not, therefore, the inner voice can be truly regarded as a revelation from God, we are brought back as always to the same criterion—the effect in terms of happiness—as the only one of concrete significance.

I shall not dwell for long on the other sanction which is put forward—namely, the 'moral law.' For if this is identified with the Will of God the previous objections apply, and if it is dissociated from or substituted for the Will of God, and endowed with some nebulous and obscure type of being of its own, independent of human beings, it will, I think, be readily seen that the same (or similar) objections apply with even greater force. Moreover to say that we 'ought' to do so and so because there is a moral law which enjoins it seems to me to be a mere repetition or tautology which gets us no farther.

The foregoing considerations show the idea of moral responsibility to be full of difficulty. But there is another type of argument which, I think, exhibits the difficulty still more clearly. For we cannot legitimately require conduct from an individual of which he is by his very nature incapable. Now in discussing the question of freedom in the last chapter I pointed out that a man was free in so far as his actions were self-determined—that is, determined by his own nature; in other words, each man acts as he does partly because he is what he is. But a man does not make his own essential nature—that is, his fundamental primordial essence. Therefore it is meaningless to say that, in a given situation, he *could* have acted otherwise than he did. He

acts in such a way in that situation because he is what he is, and therefore we cannot attach any meaning to the assertion that he was capable of acting otherwise.

I will illustrate this argument by an example. Suppose that, from his behaviour in certain situations, we judge a man to be a liar. This is a judgment of *fact*. We may dislike a man of this type, and will no doubt take account of his lying propensities in our dealings with him. But my point is that we can give no meaning to a so-called *moral* judgment regarding the situation, or to such a statement as that the man *ought* not to be a liar. He *is* a liar as the result of the interaction between his primordial nature and all the circumstances of his environment as he develops. It is of course true that he *could* have been different, but only in the sense that this is logically conceivable if his nature, or the environmental factors, or both, had been different. But this would imply a situation which does not actually exist. In fact, only two fundamental questions arise, and they are not moral questions in the accepted sense. The first concerns the nature of the factors which caused the man to be a liar; in other words, it is important to try to understand how and why he came to be a liar. The second question is what steps can be taken, or what influences can be brought to bear on him—that is, what changes can be made in the enviroing conditions—in order to change him from a liar to a truth-teller, to his own benefit and that of the community.

I think, then, that we are bound to conclude that it is difficult to give real meaning to the idea of moral responsibility. But this conclusion need not disturb us. For, as I have tried to show, the idea of the achievement of happiness provides us with sound principles, based on actual experience instead of on hypothetical or meaningless assumptions, for considering conduct and forming judgments upon it, and I believe that a dispassionate appeal to these principles, the grounds for which are open to observation and trial by anyone, would be far more effective, over the community as a whole, than appeal to abstract ethical and

metaphysical concepts which are difficult to understand (and may, indeed, be so because they really have no significant content) or involve assumptions which many are unable to accept. I would go farther, and say that the difficulty associated with the idea of moral responsibility may be in no small measure to blame for the unhappy condition in which the world at present finds itself. For the confusion caused by the affirmation of ideas which lack any real meaning, and the variety, amounting often to incompatibility, in the sanctions insisted upon by different groups and different creeds, have resulted in great misery and strife throughout the ages. But if we adopt happiness as our fundamental concept and base the idea of virtue on that of wisdom, we are on firm ground and, moreover, we can associate our regulative principles with a faith based on a rational religion.

I have now completed an outline of what I conceive to be a defensible and satisfying philosophy of life,<sup>1</sup> and, in the succeeding chapters, I shall attempt to apply this, as simply and concisely as possible, to the various fields of human experience and endeavour. I shall deal mainly with those broad and general considerations which seem to me to be the appropriate guides to belief and conduct and not with detailed applications.

<sup>1</sup> I have considered the philosophical arguments more fully in *Happiness, Freedom, and God*, Chapters II and IV.

## *Chapter IV*

### *POLITICS, ECONOMICS, AND SOCIOLOGY*

I SHALL CONSIDER together the three fields of human activity, and the study thereof, named at the head of this chapter, because they are in fact so closely interrelated that the same general principles apply fundamentally to all of them, though the details of the application may vary.

Although different definitions of the terms have been used we may, broadly speaking, regard politics as concerned with the governance of communities, in themselves and among themselves—that is, with the laying down of definite rules or laws for the control of human conduct in individuals and in groups and for determining the general conditions under which they live; economics as dealing with the production and distribution, or application, of the resources latent in human individuals and communities, and in their environments, these resources being necessary in varying degrees to the existence of the individuals and communities concerned; while sociology deals with the general situation leading to, and arising from, the various developments of community life. All three are therefore related to overlapping or closely linked aspects of the one concrete fact of human existence, and it is this which should properly bring them together into an organic unity. The fact that they are often considered more or less separately is a fruitful source of error and artificiality.

As politics is concerned with governance we must first ask what is the reason and the aim of the control which it seeks to establish. To say that politics always exists for the sake of human beings, and not the contrary, ought to be a truism, but the history of political development shows that it is a truism which must be constantly emphasized. The only intelligible reason for laying

down regulative principles of conduct is, not that this is in itself a rather intriguing and stimulating game, or contest, but that without such principles human life would be anarchic and therefore self-destructive; and the only intelligible aim for a particular code of law and order is that in its own field it leads to or renders possible a form of life which is desirable to human beings for its own sake.

What is this desirable form of life? If the thesis which I have been developing is well founded it is a form of life which leads to a state of the greatest happiness. I would therefore maintain that the practice of politics is significant and intelligible only if it is directed to the establishment of laws governing the life of communities—including the whole world-community—of such a kind as to provide the most favourable conditions for the progressive happiness of all concerned; and it would follow that the only justifiable differences among politicians are differences of opinion concerning the right kind of laws and regulations to achieve this end.

We must now inquire what is the most suitable constitution of the political body, in both its legislative and executive aspects, for the purpose I have described. I will leave for later consideration the way in which this body is elected or set up, and first consider what it should be in itself.

First, and most important, each of the individuals composing the legislature should be actuated by the realization that the activity of the body of which he is a member has for its aim the establishment of conditions most favouring the general happiness of the individuals of the community with which he is concerned.

Now politicians will inevitably differ as to the best kinds of laws and regulations for the promotion of happiness, but to make Parliament, or its equivalent, an assembly of individuals not grouped in any way, each giving free rein to his own opinions, would be neither effective nor even practicable.

But among the great variety of individual opinions there

would undoubtedly be apparent a few broad lines of evident difference and demarcation and on these could be based the grouping of Parliament into 'parties.' But these parties would in some respects be very different in motivation and behaviour from the traditional political parties. They would recognize that all have the same ultimate aim—the promotion of the general happiness of the community; that each member, no matter what his party, is honest and sincere in his opinions and in his differences from others; and, accordingly, that mutual respect and tolerance, and freedom from dogmatism and prejudice combined with a readiness to listen to and consider the views of others, are matters which should go without saying. Moreover, within the general policy of each of the parties differences of opinion on matters of detail would not only be tolerated but made the object of free and open-minded discussion.

Instead of a Government consisting only of members of the majority party, and an opposition of minorities which might feel itself under the necessity of opposing every proposed law, not so much on its merits but rather because it was proposed by the Government, it might be well that each party should be represented in the Government in proportion to its membership in Parliament. The delegates of each party in the Government would be elected by the members of that party in Parliament.

The content and form of Bills presented to Parliament would be settled by free discussion among the members of the Government, and, in case of irresolvable differences, the decision would be by majority vote. Similarly, when the Bills were presented they would be the subject of free discussion in Parliament, the final form of the enactments being determined by this discussion and, where necessary, by a majority vote. Once the vote was taken the minority would stand by it loyally so long as the decision continued to hold, but would have complete freedom to get the decision reversed in due course by honest and rational argument, which should, of course, be based in part on subsequent experience.

*Mutatis mutandis*, the principles which I have suggested should determine the attitude and conduct of the Legislature would apply equally to the Executive. The members of the latter would have always in mind the fact that laws and regulations should not only be framed with the aim of promoting the general happiness of the community but should also be *administered* in such a way as to avoid detracting from this aim, and, indeed, so far as possible to make a contribution towards it. Administration must, of course, be directed to *general* happiness, and this may on occasion appear to conflict with the happiness of individuals. But I believe that in a society which is progressively ordered more and more in accordance with the principles I have suggested such conflict would steadily diminish. Much would depend on the attitude of individual members of the community, and on this I shall have more to say in later chapters. Here I am concerned only to emphasize that the Executive should realize that administration is to be regarded, not merely as something to keep society functioning smoothly in a purely mechanical kind of way, and therefore to be determined strictly by regulation and precedent, but as a service to promote the well-being of all through the effects which it produces on each individual, having regard to his particular qualities and circumstances. To preserve order, and, at the same time, to keep the aim I have indicated steadily in mind would evidently be a difficult and delicate task, and the members of the Executive would therefore be chosen not simply on grounds of intellectual capacity, but also with regard to those qualities of mind which make for sympathy, understanding, and wisdom in dealing with human beings. But as society progressed in comprehension of the way to happiness the action and reaction between the Executive and the community at large would continually simplify the work of administration.

In the foregoing outline I have for convenience used terms, such as 'Parliament,' which are especially associated with the British system of democracy. But my principle is a general one—



namely, that to ensure an effective political contribution to progress a community should be governed by a (relatively) small body (the 'Government') chosen from an elected assembly ('Parliament') to which it is immediately responsible, the attitude both of Government and Parliament towards their work, and the motives which inspire them, being such as I have indicated.

The problem of the electoral system to be adopted in setting up a Parliament is one which I shall consider shortly. But something should first be said about the size and nature of community units. The logic of fact points more and more to the conclusion that, if the happiness of all is to be secured, the whole world must primarily be regarded as one community. The interdependence of smaller groups, and the means of communication between them, are now such as to rule out any other alternative. Ultimately, therefore, we must work towards a Parliament and Government exercising general political control over the whole world. But within the world-community there is evidently a place for smaller communities and states defined by conditions of race, geography, language, tradition, and so on. Within each of these the same system of political control might be established as for the whole, and the fundamental political problem of the future will be the working out of the most effective type of relationship between the world-community and the constituent communities, and between their respective governments. But the most vital factor is, not the system, but the attitude and motivation of all concerned which must be determined by good will—that is, by the conscious and fully accepted aim of working for the happiness of each and all.

I am aware that it may be said that, human nature being what it is, the political conception I have outlined is an impracticable utopian ideal. I cannot agree. I am concerned, not with human nature as it is, but with what I believe it could become; and I would further urge that experience has unmistakably shown that, unless we work towards some such system, inspired by the sentiments and purposes I have described, the human race is

doomed to chaos or even to temporary extinction. We have been warned—many times—and each time the warning has been more urgent and the penalty of neglecting it has brought a collapse of civilization nearer. To judge from events, the latest warning may well be the last.

Before passing on from the political to the economic aspect of community life, it is necessary to consider the question of the electoral system through which the community expresses itself. I shall not discuss particular detailed alternatives of organizing the electoral machinery—such as ‘proportional representation,’ for example—but in accordance with the general scheme of this book will confine my attention to more general considerations.

In the first place, I suggest that two things are essential—namely, that every individual should have adequate scope for expressing his opinion, according to his capacity for so doing, and for making that opinion felt, while, as a corollary, the electoral system should be such that it is apparent to every member of the community that as an individual he really counts with the community as an asset to whom due consideration should be given.

Here we come directly up against what I believe to be the main problem in self-government by a community, though it is a problem to which little or no attention has been given. Fundamental political questions are extremely complex, and reasoning about them can take place only through the medium of ideas and principles which are often somewhat abstract and involve relational thinking of a comparatively high order. Now it is well known to those psychologists who have studied intelligence and its distribution that a large part of the general population is not capable of the rather complex and difficult reasoning required. This is due primarily to certain facts regarding the nature of intelligence, which is basically a constitutional or hereditary factor, though the efficiency with which it is exercised by any individual, within the limits of his native endowment, depends on the circumstances of his environment and upbringing.

This being so, how can we expect every individual to form significant judgments on political issues and to give effect to these through, say, the recording of a vote? Indeed, it is a commonplace of observation that the lack of capacity in many individuals, which we are considering, is sometimes exploited for their own ends by those seeking positions of power in government. It is exploited, not only by tricks of oratory and written communication which have, in a sense, a rational basis, but also by all the forces of emotion and suggestion, the effects of which on the individuals concerned take the place of genuine thinking.

I think there are two ways (one general, the other more specific) in which this difficulty might be overcome in a community in which the political attitude adopted by the community as a whole and also by each of the individuals composing it is deliberately determined by the aim of seeking to ensure the greatest measure of well-being and happiness for all, in an altruistic and not only an egoistic sense. In the first place, although it is not possible, at any rate at present, to increase the intelligence of an individual by any known means, it is possible to train anyone to adopt a balanced and objective attitude in considering those problems (not only political problems) and the solutions offered for them *which are at his own level of comprehension*, and at the same time to produce in him, again at his own level, a critical attitude towards his own thinking and a tolerant readiness to listen to the opinions of others and to give due weight to them. No doubt it is not an easy matter to develop such a system of training so as to produce effective results, especially in the case of adults whose expressed beliefs and opinions have been formed as the result of long processes which are largely of a non-rational character, but the possibility is there, and the matter is greatly simplified if the training is such as to accustom individuals at all ages and levels to discuss freely among themselves, within the framework of certain controlled conditions, matters which immediately affect them and of which

they have sufficient understanding. Prime among the conditions of such discussions would be the creation of a friendly but objectively critical atmosphere in which each would be ready to recognize the fallibility of his own opinions, to give a fair hearing to the opinions of others, and to thrash out an issue rationally to the end. Moreover, it is also possible to train individuals to form significant judgments about the fitness of other individuals to represent them, judgments based on discussions with these, not necessarily of the higher and more complex political issues, but of relevant problems which are nearer to their own experience and at a level within their comprehension.

I shall say more on this matter in a later chapter, but, given an electorate trained in the manner I have described, two alternatives lie open. On the one hand every individual might exercise a vote in the election of the supreme legislature as a result of judgments based, not only (or, in some cases, at all) on the consideration of high and complex political issues, but on his opinion as to the fitness of another person to represent him in the legislature, this opinion having been formed through contact with the representative of the kind described at the end of the last paragraph. On the other hand a system of electoral levels might be established whereby each individual had a vote in the election of the members of that group only which controlled the political conditions which immediately affected him, and which he understood reasonably well. The members of this controlling group would themselves be the electors of the next highest group, and so on up to the supreme legislature and the 'government.' The second alternative is perhaps the better, though it would obviously not be easy to organize. But, once established, the system embodied in it should not be difficult to maintain; indeed, somewhat analogous hierarchies, though formed for different purposes and brought into being and recruited in a somewhat different way, already exist in many fields. In any case I think that both alternatives ought to be seriously considered.

We may now pass on to some discussion of the economic

aspect of community life. At the beginning of this chapter I described economics as dealing with the production and distribution, or application, of the resources latent in human individuals and communities, and in their environments, these resources being necessary in varying degrees to the existence of the individuals and communities concerned. It is important to remember the wide scope of the economic field. For example, a certain degree of (say) teaching power is essential to the well-being of a community, and the production, distribution, and application of this power is just as important to the community at large as, to take an extreme contrast, the production, distribution, and application of electrical power. Hence both these very different forms of 'power' fall, in certain important respects, within the economic field. It is therefore apparent from this and similar examples that every individual plays a part in the general economy of the community of which he is a member, though this part has been traditionally more stressed in the case of certain occupations, particularly in the industrial, commercial, and distributive fields.

The fundamental economic issue is, I suggest, clear and simple. It should first be pointed out that all the available evidence now goes to show, that, so far as the material necessities of human life are concerned, the world contains potentially enough, and more than enough, for all—potentially, that is, in relation to human capacity, with humanly devised mechanical aids, for extracting and applying the material in question. The same, indeed, is true, not only of the bare essentials for life, but also in regard to the material factors which make life possible at a distinctly higher level of culture and expression than that of mere existence. Moreover, at higher levels of existence the means to individual and communal expression and creativeness depend less and less on concrete material and more and more on potentialities intrinsic to the mental and spiritual nature of mankind, potentialities to which no limit is apparent either in degree or in kind. In short, there are in fact available, even if as yet largely

undeveloped, all the conditions, material and non-material, required to provide, in abundance for all, the means to a life lived to the limit of human possibility in achieving progress towards that state of being which is completely satisfying in itself, and which I regard as the full and perfect development of what we now experience as happiness; and this is true even when we regard the limit of possibility as continually expanding as we progress.

This, then, is the issue: in developing and using all the available resources shall we be guided by the principle of the so-called 'interests' of individuals and groups in themselves, considered as relatively isolated entities, interests which are conceived to be, at least in part, mutually conflicting, or shall we be guided by the principle of rational and considered harmonious co-operation between individuals and groups, conceived as forming a complete organic unity in which the interest of each is seen and accepted to be ultimately consonant, and not conflicting, with the interest of all?

The first of the two alternatives I have suggested has had a long run, and the results are apparent to all. The dispassionate observer can hardly fail to note that the principle of self (including special group) interest, conceived as conflicting in part with the interest of others, has led, as the concept itself implies, to endless actual conflict resulting in much pain and misery. In the industrial and commercial fields ruthless competition has been manifest, and in the distributive field we have often had the spectacle of unscrupulous exploitation. Other fields of human activity have been marred by selfishness, greed, and jealousy.

All this seems great foolishness. As I have maintained, the perfecting of happiness is not only the one intelligible ultimate goal, but it is in fact the goal which all human beings, consciously or unconsciously, implicitly or explicitly, are dimly groping towards in their urge to achieve conditions which shall satisfy them completely. But human beings are woefully lacking in the wisdom which discloses to them the effective means of

achieving their goal. They try all the wrong ways, and they try them as individuals actuated mainly by their own (supposed) self-interest, not understanding that true self-interest lies only in having full regard at the same time to the interests of others.

I will take a common example to illustrate my point. It is often said that it is necessary to give play to the 'profit motive' in human activity, especially in commerce and industry. But profit in terms of what? Primarily in terms of money. Nevertheless most people now realize that money in itself effects nothing. The idea of profit is therefore referred to what the possession of money can secure—for example, material amenities, opportunities (in society as at present organized) of greater entertainment, culture, and leisure, and finally power. But if there is one thing which is most obviously patent, and which the lessons of history and experience hammer home with great insistence, it is the fact that, except within relatively narrow limits, there is no connexion between the possession of money, and what follows from it, and happiness—or, if there is a connexion, it is generally of an inverse kind. This is a matter, not of sentiment, nor of ethics, nor of religion, but of the hardest observed fact. Profit, if it is to have the true significance of its name, must be expressed, in relation to the individual, directly in terms of happiness. But the conclusion is inescapable that the world and the individual are such that a pursuit of complete satisfaction by means which are mainly (or entirely) egoistic always defeats its own end.

On the other hand, personal experience, and the observation of groups which have made harmonious co-operation in the fullest sense, and not competition, the principle determining their activities, undoubtedly give the strongest support to the belief that the happiness of the individual can only be achieved in increasing measure when at the same time every regard is had to ensuring the happiness of others. Nothing less than the complete adoption of this principle is required for the development of an economic system which shall be fully justified by the

measure of the satisfaction which it brings to the community and all its members. Moreover, it is clear that in developing such a system the whole world-community must be considered as one group in relation to the various smaller sub-groups of which the whole consists.

It is, of course, much easier to lay down the principle of what may briefly and crudely be described as "co-operation not competition" than to evolve detailed methods of putting the principle into practice and getting it accepted by humanity as a whole. But there is no reason to believe that the difficulties involved pass the wit and capacity of mankind to overcome, or to doubt that, unless the principle is accepted and acted upon, the attempt to progress towards greater happiness is doomed to failure. Indeed, if we cannot make good here it must be concluded that the whole evolutionary process of human existence is without significance or hope. What is required is the deliberate adoption of a new attitude towards life by every man, a point to which I shall make fuller reference in a later chapter. But in view of this necessity the words and actions of those people, often well-meaning enough and not consciously selfish, who behave as if the past competitive scramble for the world's goods must inevitably continue in the future, render grievous disservice to the cause of mankind.

I ought perhaps to develop more explicitly the bearing of my thesis on the difficult problem of the principles which should govern the distribution of wealth. It is now, I think, fairly generally agreed that this distribution should be related to the nature of individuals themselves, and to the use they make of their powers, and not directly to external circumstances which are initially outside the control of the individual concerned.

The approach to the question of the distribution of wealth is, however, commonly based on the idea that, generally speaking, monetary reward is a necessary incentive to work and service. This seems to me to be wrong, though I admit that, until certain changes have occurred in human thought, feeling, and behaviour



—changes the necessity and urgency of which it is the main purpose of this book to suggest—the incentive of monetary reward may continue to be a necessary, though unfortunate and, in the end, harmful expedient.

Closely connected with the idea of incentive is the use of monetary reward as, in effect, a kind of bribery to persuade people to enter certain occupations. It is quite common to hear it said that the 'right people' can be attracted to a given occupation only by offering a sufficiently high financial inducement. But what about the effects upon, and the reactions of, other occupations away from which these people are attracted? I suggest that it is quite irrational to consider in isolation the needs and interests of a particular occupation or group of occupations in this way. The difficulty could probably be avoided by suitable upbringing and occupational guidance and allocation, though I would emphasize that it would be important here to secure the best possible balance between the needs of the community and the interests, capacities, and desires of individuals. The present comparatively blind and haphazard conflict between the demands of different occupations would then be replaced by rational planning without regimentation.

I should therefore suggest a different line of approach to the problem. If every individual received the type of training and culture most suitable for him and was at the same time guided towards that form of life which was best suited to his interests and abilities on the one hand, and to the needs of the community on the other, then work and service should become in themselves matters of individual satisfaction and self-fulfilment requiring no particular monetary incentive for their effective pursuit.

We should then be left only with the question of providing for every one, apart from his occupation as a member of the community, the minimum essentials of life and the means to full personal development according to his needs and capacities. In other words, we should have, as regards the latter, to provide

opportunities for culture of which every individual would be able to take advantage at his own level; and among the means to culture I should include the nature of the immediate environment with which the individual could surround himself, and also those aspects of life which would commonly be described as 'recreation' and 'entertainment.'

We have already taken some steps in providing means to culture which are freely accessible to all in, for example, our national and local public libraries and museums. But I do not think it would be practicable for the community to provide either the minimum essentials of living or the various kinds of culture free, without the surrender by individuals of any token. It is here, I suggest, that the function of money, in the form of token currency, comes in. Currency would be a method of simplification and control, and of ensuring that everyone could receive his fair share. The purchase prices both of life essentials and of the various cultural facilities would be related to the needs and the demands of individuals, and these prices would also be a function of the amount of currency distributed. The fixing of them would be a matter of trial and experiment.

As regards the actual periodic distribution of currency I feel that it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the same amount should be allocated at intervals to *every* adult member of the community, with suitable, though different, allocations for children of different age-ranges.<sup>1</sup> This conclusion may seem less drastic if we remember that it presupposes the provision for all, by the community, of the various social services, and, in exchange for currency, the essentials of life and the facilities for culture. The type of culture most likely to contribute to personal development would vary, in degree and in kind, with the individual. But the facilities would be there, and the amount of each

<sup>1</sup> The system I am describing is obviously similar, in some respects, to the emergency rationing by 'points' and 'coupons.' But the latter is highly restrictive, applies only to certain essentials, and exists side by side with the traditional currency; nevertheless its success provides some evidence of the practicability of the much wider system which I suggest.

would be adjusted by trial to the demand. The life occupations of many members of the community would, of course, consist in providing and making accessible the essentials of life in some cases and in others the means to culture.

One great advantage of a currency system is that it gives a freedom of choice to individuals, and there is, of course, a range of alternatives in regard to life essentials as well as in regard to culture. But it is possible that an additional advantage might lie in the provision of two forms of currency, one only for the purchase of essentials, the other only for the purchase of the means to culture. Every individual would receive the same amount of each form of currency, and supply of 'goods' and 'services' would be determined, not by a particular distribution of different degrees of 'purchasing power,' in terms of currency, among the members of the community, but by the personal needs of the latter. Each unit of currency would be used once only by the person to whom it was allotted, and would then be cancelled.

In such a system taxation would be unnecessary. The community services would be provided by the material resources available and by the work of certain members of the community. But I do not think that it necessarily follows that all services and material resources should be controlled *directly* by the community. The provision of these might be, in part, a matter of private enterprise, though it must be remembered that I am assuming a state of affairs in which the activities of individuals are determined, not by the so-called 'profit motive,' which would have ceased to have any significance, but by the satisfaction and fulfilment derived from engaging in those activities. The community would, however, have to exercise a general supervision over all, though it would delegate a part of its responsibilities to private individuals or groups of individuals, allocating to them appropriate amounts of material and acting in harmonious co-operation and consultation with them; but the final control of basic material resources would necessarily have to lie with the

community, and, in the circumstances, there could hardly be objection to this.

The method of expenditure of the amount of currency allocated to him would be largely a matter for the individual. But some measure of control might be necessary to avoid the danger of 'hoarding' by some individuals, followed by a sudden unloading of currency, which would upset the balance of supply and demand. This control might be exercised, perhaps, by making currency tokens negotiable only for a certain period following their distribution, though this period should be long enough to enable every one, under normal conditions, to make use of his tokens before the date of expiry. It must also be remembered that individual motivation is assumed to be of a more enlightened type than at present.

Two difficulties arise. The first is that of the person who fails to render the service due from him. I think this must be regarded as anti-social behaviour, but the first step to be taken would not be of a punitive character, but would be in the nature of an inquiry into the root causes of the lapse. When these were determined it would generally be possible to decide on the remedial methods necessary to restore the defaulter to normality in both his individual and social life. The measures, if any, to be taken in regard to the allocation of currency during the period of defect and cure could only be decided in the light of all the circumstances of the particular case.

The second difficulty arises in connexion with those necessary occupations which involve special difficulty, discomfort, boring routine, or danger. I think that the first thing to be said about these occupations is that in most and probably in all such cases a great deal more could be done than at present to diminish the degree in which the deterrent factors operate. Having done this we should have to rely on the possibility that, with greatly improved methods and conditions, there would be a sufficient number of people whose interests and abilities incline them towards even those occupations which suffer from drawbacks

such as I have indicated. The variety of human nature is such that I should not feel unduly pessimistic about such a possibility, especially as one consequence of improved methods, particularly in regard to mechanical aids, would usually be that the necessary work could be done by far fewer people in far less time. Evidently we could not meet the difficulty by increased 'rewards,' for, by hypothesis, the personal needs of all would already be met.

Clearly a system on the lines described would apply most directly to a community such as a national state, but I see no reason why, *mutatis mutandis*, it should not ultimately be applied internationally to the whole world-community. Like most of the suggestions in this book it could not stand alone but would be associated with certain general fundamental changes in human motivation and conduct which, as I am trying to show, are urgently necessary if our human society is to progress, or even to survive in a recognizable form.

I have been considering the problem regarding means to the application in the economic field of certain principles of belief and conduct. An analogous problem arises, of course, in the political field. Such problems pass over into the realm of sociology.

I have referred earlier to the interrelatedness of politics, economics, and sociology. But the relation of the two former to sociology is different in kind from their relation to one another. Sociology investigates the means of applying the guiding principles adopted in such fields as politics and economics; it is therefore the science on which the latter are based. The logical (but not the psychological) order is, in fact, as follows: first the adoption of an ethical system, which is in the long run itself determined and justified in part by metaphysical considerations. The system I have been advocating is based on the key concepts of happiness and wisdom. The consequences of the ethical system are then formulated in general principles applicable to the various fields of human experience and activity, of which politics and economics are important examples. It is then

necessary to consider methods of implementing these principles in the fields in question. This is the province of sociology which, in pursuing its inquiry, draws largely, of course, on such sciences as biology and psychology, both group and individual.

In accordance with my general purpose I shall deal for the most part only with the broader aspects of sociology, and not with its more detailed applications. I have said that clues to the way to happiness are provided by experience and can be sought in experiment. The search for these clues, so far as they are or can be made apparent in community life, is a prime task of sociology. It is, indeed, the constructive complement of that other aspect of sociology which consists in the observation and systematic description of the conditions of group life and its development both past and present. We must, of course, look ultimately to the nature and development of the individual, for society consists of individuals, and I shall deal with this specially in my closing chapters. But it is possible within limits to consider the characteristics and potentialities of human groups in themselves without specific reference to the particular individuals composing them.

It would fall to the lot of sociology, then, to attempt to determine the means of achieving progress towards happiness, if such a goal were adopted, partly through observation and interpretation of actual experience, present and past—and here it must seek help from the study of history—and partly through planned experiment and observation of the results thereof.

One result—indeed, the most important result—of this would be the determination of ways and means of establishing the environmental conditions, material and otherwise, which are essential if happiness is to increase, and, at the same time, of producing in human societies the attitude most conducive to this increase. In particular it would be necessary to decide whether, in any given case, existing conditions were so chaotic, or so inimical to the result it is desired to produce, that the only method likely to be effective would be the ruthless removal or

destruction of the factors, including human agents, which are decisive influences in the state of the community as it actually is, followed by deliberate planning proceeding from an almost entirely fresh start. This is the method of revolution, and its (at least temporary) consequences in terms of pain and misery are generally such that, if it ever be justified at all it can only be on the basis of a very high degree of certainty that the result ultimately arrived at is completely justified in itself, and also most likely to be achieved.

On the other hand, it may appear that existing conditions are such that they can be changed in the direction of the desired end by a relatively gradual process which starts from things as they are and moulds and develops them into the things hoped for. This is the method of evolutionary reform, and it would, no doubt, be generally agreed that it is altogether preferable to the method of revolution, at any rate provided that it does not fall far short of the latter in its effectiveness in regard to its aim. We have, in fact, to consider the state of happiness of the community, not only in the condition at which we are aiming, but also in the transition to that condition from the existing state of affairs.

There are, of course, certain minimum essentials as regards, for example, material conditions, health, and so on, without which a steady increase in the happiness of the community seems to be impossible. With these, as a matter of detail, I am not primarily concerned, though I shall refer to them incidentally. Here I would only say that it is of the utmost importance that the determination and definition of these minimum essentials should be precise. For example, it is now commonly considered that 'security' is one of the essentials, but this security should not be of a nature to damp down the adventurous creativeness of the human spirit, but only such that, without it, creative activity, and therefore satisfaction and fulfilment, would hardly be possible at all.

I cannot help feeling that if the interdependence of human

beings in regard to happiness were fully recognized and acted upon problems such as those arising, for example, from the adjustment of private interest, large-scale corporative activity, and public control, would be largely resolved, or, at any rate, much reduced in difficulty. For it can hardly be denied that there is a place in human economy for the activities both of individuals and of great corporations, while a rational measure of public control is obviously necessary in the interests of order and progress. The difficulty arises because, instead of regarding individual and corporative pursuits as processes which in themselves, and not only in their results, are a means to the satisfaction of those concerned, it is customary to look upon them as competitive and conflicting, if not incompatible, while public control is frequently regarded as an irritating brake on 'free' activities directed for the most part to selfish ends. The resulting abysmal failure to achieve that complete satisfaction at which all are really aiming is patent. Matters can only be put right by a deliberate and sincere reversal of the present attitudes and beliefs, and a determination to work together for the well-being of all combined with a realization that in so doing the individual will be making a potent contribution towards his own happiness (not only in the end, but also in the process of approaching that end) as well as to the happiness of the community. The relevant problem of sociology would then be reduced to the investigation, *on the assumption of the goodwill of all concerned*, of the best methods of combining the various factors in order to lead to increasing happiness.

It seems clear that a reversal of current human attitudes would be attended by very different degrees of difficulty in different communities, varying from the most backward to the most enlightened, though the use of those terms is justified only in a relative way. Ultimately, the achievement of the desired end must involve the world-community as a whole and is, indeed, impossible of completion without this. But it can hardly be denied that certain nations are now, or are soon likely to be, in



a peculiarly favourable position to take the lead in initiating attempts to progress towards a happier world. Yet they will, and can, do so only if their nationals are ready to try the experiment of acting consistently on the principle that the satisfying fulfilment of human life can be conceived only in terms of something essentially akin to happiness, and that the individual cannot find his own happiness except at the same time he seeks the happiness of others. Moreover, I would once again emphasize that this is not a matter of 'softness' or sentimentality but of inescapable fact. As such it cannot be ignored.

I do not underrate the difficulties and complexities of the sociological problem even were these reduced by a fundamental change in human attitudes of the kind I have indicated. But the fact remains that the major part of the difficulty arises from the selfish, aggressive and non-co-operative motives which are manifest too frequently in human behaviour, and the reversal of these would be a long step towards the solution of the social problem. Moreover, it is easy to exaggerate the difficulties with which a would-be reformer might be confronted. For conditions of acute crisis have revealed, in this and some other countries, the existence of a widespread underlying fund of general goodwill and readiness to act in the interests of other individuals and of the whole community. This indicates that the obstacles to the achievement of the desired end, and to the process of transition to conditions more favourable to the latter, are very far from insuperable. Indeed, the manifestations to which I have referred in themselves define the most urgent social problem as that of harnessing and developing the altruistic motives and attitudes, which operate in conditions of crisis, for the service of general progress in conditions less obviously acute, and therefore less spectacular and less stimulating, than those of immediate national peril.

There is, I think, apparent in most communities, at some stage of their development, a tendency to split, psychologically if not always on clear lines of physical or social demarcation, into two

groups which conceive themselves to be fundamentally opposed as regards their respective supposed 'interests.' There are various ways in which these groups are imagined, and corresponding differences in their symbolic names, for example, 'Capital' and 'Labour,' 'exploiters' and 'exploited,' 'governors' and 'governed,' 'they' and 'we.' If this were all, the resulting groups would not be stable, or capable of orderly development and progress, for the basic idea underlying them is that of conflict, which is self-destructive. But fortunately there is usually, and perhaps always, a tendency to the formation of a third group. This group is formed in part (and, perhaps, in the last analysis wholly) by extrusion of individuals from the other two groups. Some individuals raise themselves from the 'lower' group by qualities of intelligence and character, and although they are naturally always influenced by the conditions from which they have come, they may frequently divest themselves of bitterness and prove capable of taking up an enlightened and objective attitude towards social and ethical problems. On the other hand, some members of the 'upper' group—often younger members—either because they develop a kind of 'social conscience' or for other reasons, detach themselves from the concepts which determine the behaviour of the group from which they spring and become exponents of reform, in theory and in practice, under the pressure of a sense of the wrongs suffered by some of their fellows. It should be made clear that this third group is essentially different in constitution and in motivation, from a social or economic 'middle class,' though they may overlap physically. Its members may be found in many different social and occupational fields, and most obviously, perhaps, among such people as teachers, doctors, social workers, and ministers of religion. But in the existence of this third group there lies one of the main hopes of progress in the sense in which I have defined it, for it implies the possibility of bringing together into a harmonious integration the two fundamental groups which have developed in conditions which are the reverse of harmony and happiness.

I am nevertheless very conscious of the difficulty which arises, in any systematic attempt to change human attitudes, of making real contact with that section of the community known as the 'depressed' class. The conditions in which these people live, and by which they have been moulded, almost defeat the imagination of the rest of the community. It is clear that the initial attempts at contact must start from the situation as it exists, and by means which appeal to the unfortunate persons concerned by falling within their comprehension and within the pattern of their circumstances and state of mind. No attempt is likely to be successful which translates them suddenly to what would be considered by other sections of the community as a much higher level of existence. They must be gradually prepared for the latter. This point is illustrated, for example, by the at least partial failure of some of the experiments in destroying the homes of slum-dwellers and transferring them, more or less abruptly, to far better housing conditions. This often results in the creation of what, relative to the new environment, is simply another slum. But the detailed investigation of the sociological problem of finding the most effective methods of transition does not fall within the scope of my present purpose.

I should add, however, that I realize that, in any attempt to bring about a change in human attitudes, the difficulty of making the initial contact with those concerned is not confined to the case of one particular group.

The community can be cross-classified in many different ways—*e.g.*, by age, sex, or occupational level. Apart from the difficulties raised by foolish motives and beliefs—and I use the term 'foolish' as more appropriate to my philosophy than the term 'wrong' in the conventional moral sense—it is one of the tasks of sociology to determine the functions of these various classes in a progressive society, and to investigate the conditions which it is necessary to create if these functions are to be effectively fulfilled. But I believe that with the widespread adoption of an ethos of the kind I have suggested all such sociological problems would

be greatly simplified, and this simplification would increase at compound interest in the course of progress towards the solution of the problems in question. Things would get rapidly easier as one went on.

Another and more general problem of sociology, to which some reference should be made, is that of harmonizing freedom with order or discipline at every stage and in all conditions. Here again the good will of the individual is of paramount importance in reducing the difficulty of the problem. Given this, the general principle of the solution lies in regarding the degree of order and discipline to be aimed at as the minimum required to provide a stable framework within which the activities and creative impulses of the individual can be given free play without endangering or hindering the self-expression of other individuals. Only in such conditions can that harmonious combination of personal and social aims be achieved which is a necessary condition of progress towards general and individual happiness.

One particular and important aspect of the topic I have just mentioned is that of public restraint and the penal code. It seems clear that the necessary degree of such restraint and 'punishment' would steadily diminish with the transformation of selfish and competitive motivation into a general attitude towards life in which the *true* interests of the individual and the community are reconciled and reinforce one another. But the same broad considerations apply at all stages in this process.

In the first place, the belief in the deterrent effect of certain limitations and penalties which society imposes on those guilty of anti-social acts is surely fallacious. For not only is its efficacy, even within the narrow range of its own immediate purpose, extremely doubtful, but it is wrong in principle, for it seeks to set up a motive for individual behaviour which is indefensible. To act, or to refrain from acting, in a certain way simply through fear of the consequences to oneself is to develop motives which will set up conflict, not only in the individual himself, but also between him and society.

The fundamental question for society, in the case of individual misbehaviour, is not how to establish terrifying preventives, which are, in any case, of limited effect, but what are the conditions which have led to a state of mind in the offender which causes him to act anti-socially, and whether this state of mind is remediable in such a way as to set the individual concerned on the path to happiness and at the same time to convert him into an asset, instead of a liability, in social progress. These considerations seem to me to apply even in the more extreme examples of anti-social behaviour such as homicide. I take it for granted that mere 'revenge' is now excluded by most people as a justifiable motive on the part of society in dealing with its weaker brethren.

All the resources of the sciences of human motivation and behaviour should be brought to bear on the re-education of the misguided offender. In particular, the conditions imposed on him should be expansive rather than restrictive. For example, the confinement as regards space, light, and air which have marked the penal disciplines of the past are the very negation of the needs of the soul which has fallen sick.

It may, of course, happen that in certain cases there appears to be no possibility of cure, though we shall have to be much wiser than we are at present before we can certainly assert that this can sometimes occur. But if, lacking full wisdom, we must on occasion reluctantly adopt this conclusion, there seems to be no alternative between the painless extermination of the individuals concerned or their perpetual segregation, though under conditions which do not involve suffering or degradation. I shall not presume to suggest a decision between these most difficult of alternatives.

In closing this present chapter on the group aspects of human life, and their relations to human happiness, I would once more remark that we must in the end look to the state of mind of the individual human being if we are to find the key to happiness, and this matter I shall later have to consider in some detail. But

I hope that I have already made clear, among other things, my belief in the close interdependence of the various aspects of human life. Such abstractions as, for example, the concept of 'the economic man,' and the associated belief that the fundamental causes of the ills of mankind are economic, seem to me to be altogether misleading. The underlying malady is not economic, nor political, but spiritual, and its effects are manifest in every sphere of life.

## *Chapter V*

### *PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS*

IN THE LAST chapter I was mainly concerned with those aspects of human existence which are determined by the pattern of group relationships in a community. In this chapter I shall approach the discussion of that side of life which is predominantly individual in character.

It would perhaps not be too much to say that personal relationships afford greater possibilities of developing and increasing human happiness than any other medium, though it is of course true that, wrongly handled, they may lead to equally great misery. The chief reasons for the power of personal relationships are that they are fundamentally, though not incidentally, independent of extraneous factors, depending, as they do for the most part, on the inner resources of mind and spirit, and at the same time can be made intrinsically satisfying in themselves.

I shall offer some comments on the points arising from the general nature of these relationships, though one cannot get very far in the discussion of them without specifying more particularly the nature of the individuals concerned.

It should be pointed out that, apart from the personal relations between pairs of individuals or within relatively small groups, which is our main topic here, there is a relation of the individual to the community which is personal and quite different in character from his relation, simply as one unit constituent, to the community when the latter is regarded objectively as a whole. It is sufficient merely to refer to this point here, for the consideration of the relations between community and individual has been implicit or explicit in my theme throughout, and I shall return to it again in the sequel.

For simplicity, I will write in terms of the relations between

two individuals though, *mutatis mutandis*, the same general principles apply to the interrelations of members of small groups. The initial cause of the establishment of a relation between two people is probably unanalysable, though I think reasons—ultimately metaphysical reasons—of a general character can be given for the fact that such relations are a prominent feature of human life, but I am not concerned with these reasons here. In the particular case the basis of the relationship is a mutual attraction which, though it may be illuminated by psychological considerations, seems to derive from some primary factor which cannot be analysed. The attraction is, in this sense, an ultimate fact which can only be accepted as such.

If the relation is to be developed in such a way as to be the occasion of greater happiness for those concerned it is necessary for each of them to explore the personality of the other with all consideration and circumspection, especially in the initial stages. This process should be marked on both sides by tolerance and efforts at sympathetic imagination and understanding, and by an absence of imposition of any kind, especially that particular kind of imposition which may be termed “possessiveness.”

In developing contact and adjustment on these lines each will discover, on the one hand, those characteristics which are shared in common, and which therefore enable the two personalities to reinforce one another, and, on the other hand, those characteristics which are complementary, and which therefore enable each personality to fulfil the needs, and correct the deficiencies, of the other. I include among the latter those traits which might be regarded, *prima facie*, as antagonistic, for in the modification and adjustment of these may well be found means to personal improvement and enrichment.

The process I have described involves on both sides a complete respect for the other partner in the relation as an individual person whose happiness is in the nature of an ultimate value, having as well founded a right of place in the structure of existence as the happiness of any other individual.



It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that the relation should as far as possible be developed in such a way as to contribute, by its reactions on the community, to an increase in the happiness of all, and certainly so as in no wise to detract from this. But I suggest that a relation between two people, developed on some such lines as I have outlined, can hardly fail of this effect, whether the latter is deliberately aimed at or not; for the complete isolation of individuals from the community is almost, if not quite, impossible, and the interrelations of a society and its members cannot in general fall below a certain minimum level.

An ideally developed personal relationship, and I do not regard the ideal here as impossible of approximation, may be expected to tend to a finality which is relatively complete in itself. In such a state each partner finds something approaching full satisfaction in the companionship of the other for its own sake, through the consequent interplay of the two personalities, in all their aspects, and at times through silent comradeship and communion.

It will, I hope, be clear that I regard the development of a personal relationship as something essentially creative, as well as exploratory. Indeed I think it possible that the final state of being, if it is believed that the universe, as disclosed to us in this life, can only be rendered intelligible by assuming that there is for each of us an experience beyond this life, may consist completely in something in the nature of personal relationships developed to the highest order and in a variety of ways beyond the scope of our present imagination. Such a state (and I purposely refrain here from enlarging the conception of it by including our relations with God, though these might be regarded as the basis of the community structure within the pattern of which the particular personal relationships would exist) would be something dynamic and creative of an indefinite variety of patterns of experience, and not in the nature of some static and stagnant condition of endlessness the idea of which many people find so terrifying in their ponderings on the nature of immortal life. In

our present existence the activities that are most completely satisfying for their own sakes are those which result in the creation of patterns of experience involving every side of the individual—intellectual, æsthetic, emotional, and spiritual—and of which the most striking examples are to be found in the fields of science, art, philosophy, and religion. Here and now our creative activity works often through the medium of the interplay of personalities and material things, but ultimately it may work, and to its highest effect, through the interplay of personalities alone.

In leaving the purely general aspects of personal relationships and passing on to the consideration of more specific conditions one is confronted with so great a variety of possible combinations that it would be impossible to traverse these with any approach to completeness. But one or two particular types of relation stand out in importance, and these may be taken as illustrative, and discussed not only in their personal but also in their community aspects.

As a first example we may take the relation of an older person to a younger. The details of such a relation will depend in part on the degree of disparity in age, but certain general considerations apply. In view of his usually greater maturity and experience the main responsibility for the satisfactory development of the relationship falls, especially in the initial stages, on the older person. The latter should not only act upon general principles of a kind which I have already outlined, but will be required to make a special effort of memory and imagination in understanding and interpreting the impulses and the point of view of the younger partner in the relation. While it may be inevitable that, as people grow older, they have a tendency to drift away from a sympathetic understanding of a younger generation, it is most important that this tendency should be kept in check and its effects reduced to a minimum. This is quite possible if it is made a conscious and deliberate aim. Two things are necessary: the first is that as we grow older we should try to keep fresh in our

memory the experiences—intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual—of our own youth, not in the form of infantile or adolescent fixations, but as the material of rational and objective reflection regarding the process by which we have ourselves developed from youth to maturity or farther. The second necessity is that we should take fully into account the changes in the environmental conditions, understood in the fullest sense, which have taken place since our own youth, and so be in a position to contrast the factors which combined to produce our own youthful experiences with those operating in the case of a generation younger than our own. Where we find it difficult or impossible to understand the behaviour of youth, or to imagine its causes, we should suspend judgment.

Some of the most important examples of the relationship of older and younger people are those which fall within the family group. I shall consider these more particularly in the last part of this chapter. For the moment I would only offer a reminder of the obvious fact that, in the young-old relation, the contribution of the younger partner, at its best, lies in its general vitalizing effect, its urgent sense of the need for beneficial change, its freshness of outlook and, often, clarity of aim (if only within a narrow range and frequently mistaken in kind), and its impatience of hypocrisy, complacency, or temporizing. *Per contra*, the contribution of the older partner, at its best, is that of a stabilizing influence, a security factor in reserve, a balanced view of desirable changes in relation to existing conditions which determine the best method of approach (which may not be *apparently* the quickest) in trying to bring about the changes in question, rational tolerance, and a fund of knowledge, experience, and wisdom.

Though I have approached the question of the respective functions of younger and older, in their interrelations, in a personal context, the extension to community life is immediate and of the first importance. The sociological problem is to develop a system in which the most effective potential contributions of

older and younger can be brought to realization in a harmoniously co-operative way. Youth is quite ready to accept the claim of its elders to lay down reasonable but not unwarrantably restrictive regulations regarding conduct; to give advice when this is sought, but not to pontificate or to assume infallibility; and to play a main part in the general governance of community groups large and small, provided full use is made of the qualities and capacities of young people in this field where these have been justified through opportunities which they have been given, and for which youth reasonably asks, of manifesting themselves. Above all the young take comfort, even if unacknowledged, in the presence in the background of older people to whom recourse may be had when difficulties and conflicts arise which they themselves find irresolvable or overwhelming, always provided that this potential source of security and comfort is not imposed by the elders, and that the recognition of its existence is tacit and not too openly expressed.

I come now to what is, in many respects, the most important of all relationships, both from the personal and from the social angle—namely, those between individuals of opposite sex. If a discussion of this topic is to be significant we must rid ourselves of all prejudices and influences of taboo or convention, and approach it with exactly the same openness and freedom from constraint and inhibition with which we try to approach any other matters of vital human interest. Fortunately recent changes in public opinion have been such that the disabilities formerly suffered by those who felt the necessity of a fundamental treatment of this matter now operate only in a greatly diminished degree. Indeed, the removal of the ancient taboo, mainly under the pressure of urgent social problems, has patently resulted in a growing atmosphere of relief and release which is highly significant.

Sex is undoubtedly a basic element in life—in some respects, perhaps, even *the* basic element. The ultimate ground for this may lie in the fact that a necessary condition of concrete

existence is differentiation—completely undifferentiated being, structureless and relationless, is nothing. Moreover it seems reasonable to regard the differentiations, which are a condition of existence, as necessarily complementary in character, for, when undifferentiated, they may be conceived as neutralizing one another to produce, in effect, a state of nothingness. This may be the reason for the prevalence, in all fields of experience, of a feature which gives rise to the concept of polarity and the attraction of opposites. Sex is the development of basic differentiation to higher levels of existence—those of life and consciousness. But the differentiation, though it may be progressive, is rarely, if ever, complete. This is true of sex. No individual is *completely* male or *completely* female, a point to which I shall refer again shortly.

In any case, whatever may be the ultimate ground of the differentiation, sex permeates the whole of life, and it seems clear that the main characteristics of the two sexes are complementary. In saying this I forget neither those characteristics which are common to both sexes as human beings nor the existence of certain individuals who are bi-sexual, or even more complicated in nature, in varying degrees. But I do not think that anything arises in these connexions which contradicts what I have said, though it is a point which I cannot pursue further here.

On the mental side, the evidence for the ubiquity of sexual factors in the life processes has long been known to, and accepted by, psychologists without their by any means necessarily subscribing to the doctrines of the more extreme disciples of the Freudian school. On the physiological side the cruder evidence of this ubiquity, manifest in structural differences between the sexes, is obvious. But as research has progressed it has become increasingly apparent that the influence of sexual factors operates also in other less obvious, though profound, ways. For example, it is now known that the sex hormones exercise a far-reaching influence on those basic metabolic processes on which the whole functioning of the organism depends.

At the same time there is evidence equally of the complementary nature of sex differentiation. But this often lies, not so much in the specific character of the individual's activities, as in the attitude and approach to these. We must, indeed, distinguish between types of activity for which one of the sexes is definitely fitted by nature while the other is as definitely unfitted, and types of activity which are, in themselves, equally appropriate to either sex, though the total situation involved in them is quite different in certain respects in the two cases. Thus the *distribution* of women's interests differs considerably from that of men's interests. For example, *some* women are deeply interested in mechanical processes and, within certain physical limits, these processes may be considered as an equally appropriate field of activity for both sexes; but *many more* men than women are interested in mechanical things. The same principle holds in all fields of human activity. Moreover, what might be called the distribution of emphasis over the various aspects of experience—intellectual, emotional, and so on—is very different for women from what it is for men. Such considerations should always be borne in mind in discussing the respective functions of the sexes in personal and communal life. It is, or should be, unnecessary now to raise any question as to the 'equality' of the sexes—each is entitled to the opportunity and scope most calculated to realize as fully as possible the happiness of the individual as a value of the same rank in every case. At the same time there should be no attempt to *identify* the sexes in allocating activities, for, whether these activities are the same or different, the attitude and approach will vary with sex, a factor of which account must always be taken, especially as, properly handled, it greatly enhances the effect of co-operation between the sexes. It would have been surprising, indeed, if the profound difference in biological function between man and woman had not been accompanied by some striking psychological differences.

I have pointed out that sex differentiation is never complete. This is apparent on the physiological side in the fact that

members of one sex exhibit vestigial or atrophied traces of certain elements of structure which are specially characteristic of the other sex, *e.g.*—in the breast and the genital organs. Moreover, in the body of every individual there are present hormones of the opposite sex to his or her own, and the degree of balance between these and the hormones which, by their normal preponderance, determine the individual's own sex, has a profound influence in varying circumstances and at different periods of life on organic processes and therefore on health and happiness.

Again, every man has something of the feminine, though in varying degrees, in his mental make-up, and *vice versa*. But whether the mental and physical differentiation of the sexes will increase with further evolution is perhaps an open question. There seem to be obvious advantages, especially on the psychological side, in the existence of a certain degree of bi-sexuality in every individual, for this may not only result in an increase of efficiency in meeting life situations and in a certain enrichment of personality, but also in promoting better understanding between the sexes. On the other hand, a too incomplete differentiation may lead to results which most people would, no doubt, regard as undesirable, as in the case of the over-'effeminate' man or the 'masculine' woman.

Although the original biological function of sexual activity may have been only the perpetuation of the species, it is clear that, at the human level, sex fulfils a more extended purpose. There are, in fact, two main aspects of the latter which, though no doubt interrelated, are justified, each in its own right, as conducive to happiness. The one remains the purpose of procreation, though in a much fuller sense than at the animal level owing to the development of those particular relations which hold within the family group. The other is the personal joy occasioned by sexual companionship, which reaches its most intense degree in the more intimate relations of man and woman. To those who tend to depreciate the worth of this second function of human sexual activity, or to regard it as altogether

subordinate on the grounds of the evolutionary primacy of the procreative function, one might reply that, to understand fully the nature of a developing process, we must look not simply at its origin but at the process as a whole. Indeed, the end reached at any stage may be far more important and revealing than the origin, for it is in the developing end that the true inner purpose of the process tends to become ever clearer. In the case of sex the personal aspects of the trend of development, and the relation of these to human happiness, are more and more manifest.

Conversely, sex, just because of its ubiquity and profundity, contains not only some of the greatest possibilities of happiness, but also, if wrongly directed, some of the worst possibilities of unhappiness and misery. For this reason it is of the first importance that every human being should have the chance of living a full and satisfying sex life, and should be suitably prepared for this through factual information given objectively, guidance in meeting and dealing with emotional problems, and preparation for marriage. In this connexion account has to be taken of the limitations as well as the possibilities of sublimation of the impulse associated with the primary sexual function.

I shall here pass to the more specific consideration of the personal sex relation between man and woman and of relations within the family. For I think that the relevant evidence from all quarters tends to show that potentially the most effective unit of society in this context, in the furtherance of individual and communal happiness, is typified by the family group centred on a permanent relation between a man and a woman. I have used the word 'potentially' because the possibilities of marriage and of family life have, in general, been much mis-handled.

The ability to live continually in the closest association with a person of the opposite sex, in such a way as to develop to the full all the possibilities of happiness latent in such a situation, is an art requiring, and, indeed, worthy of, all the resources of personality—intellectual, æsthetic, and emotional. The principles



which I offered for consideration, in regard to personal relationships in general, apply here in the highest degree. The greatest difficulties are naturally encountered in the early stages, but if these are overcome and the beginnings of a fully harmonious and creative relation is established the further development of the relationship tends to become less and less a matter of deliberate effort and control, and more and more a spontaneous growth in happiness, marked by joy and variety in shared experiences of all kinds of which the partners are intensely conscious though they no longer find it necessary to exercise continual conscious control over it. On the other hand, if the initial efforts at adjustment go awry the result is conflict and unhappiness resulting in a breaking of the relationship or a degeneration into dullness and monotony as a defence against an even more unhappy condition.

It is, of course, true that an important contributory cause of the failure of our present society so far to develop the full potentialities of marriage as a prime factor in happiness are the manifold anxieties, great and small, which accompany the economic and social life of so many people. If only for the repercussion of this state of affairs on marriage the remedying of it is a matter of great sociological importance. But the fact remains that the major cause of unhappiness in married life is lack of true understanding and sympathy between the partners. Where such understanding and sympathy exist the effect of disturbing factors is correspondingly mitigated.

I believe that an essential condition of the *full* development of marriage as a ground for happiness is the existence between man and wife of a deep-rooted love, tenderness and passion. To some this may appear a truism, but it is, in fact, by no means universally accepted as such. If it appears that marriages 'arranged' on other grounds are often relatively more successful than 'love marriages,' it is not, I think, because arranged marriages are sounder in principle but only because, even when love is initially present, so many marriages come to grief through lack

of adequate preparation and through misunderstanding for which the people concerned are not primarily to blame. But, granted suitable preparation, the existence of a mutual love—the ultimate reasons for which, and for the spontaneous attraction on which it is often based, are probably unanalysable—is a great aid in the overcoming of the inevitable difficulties and in the achievement of a considerable measure of lasting joy and happiness. It is on the emotional side that the rational and physical aspects of marriage find their only adequate complement.

In considering the preparation of young people for marriage one might add that it is natural for both sexes to grow up together and to mix freely at all stages and in all conditions. At the same time it must be remembered that each sex has its own particular interests and ways of approach to life which it may wish to pursue from time to time in separation from the other sex, and suitable opportunities should be provided for this. Moreover, the points of view of the sexes differ greatly in certain important respects and the various aspects of life appeal to them in different ways. But for many social and recreative activities the sexes should join, and they should be able to discuss freely and thoroughly among themselves all matters of common interest. In short, we should so arrange matters that it is easy for the sexes to mingle or to separate as may be most appropriate to the occasion.

There is one point here the importance of which is often overlooked. It is not enough for young people to mix in groups. To achieve anything approaching a full understanding of the personality of another individual something more private is needed. Our failure to make possible for pairs of young people an adequate amount of controlled privacy is not only unfair to them but may also be one of the root causes of some of the social evils with which we have to contend.

We should be quite honest with young people, in matters of sex as in everything else. One of the chief causes of cynicism and selfishness in the young is, I think, the shock of realizing

that the actual practice of adult life falls far short of, and is often contradictory to, the conventional standards preached or imposed by adults in home, school, and elsewhere. No community can hope to make real progress while such a situation remains unresolved.

But, however suitable and adequate a preparation for marriage we may be able to develop, it is inevitable that, when two people enter more or less suddenly for the first time upon the experience of living in conditions of the closest continuous intimacy with one of the opposite sex, the establishment of harmonious adjustment and a creative relationship that will realize all the possibilities of a happy marriage is a problem requiring the most intelligent and understanding approach of which those concerned are capable.

While, as I have already said, the presence of a mutual love must be regarded as an essential factor in a happy marriage, this is only the basis. Without respect, sympathy, and tolerance on both sides it is likely to wither or turn to dislike, or even to hatred. Each of the partners should constantly remember that the interests of the other, and the degree and kind of importance attached by the other to the various aspects of life, are very different from his or her own. Women often ascribe value, in the common sense of the term, to things which may seem to men trivial or of little importance, and *vice versa*. Each sex has therefore some tendency to ridicule the tastes and predilections of the other. There is no ground for this, for, as I have tried to show, value is relative to the individual, and that a man cannot understand *why* a woman feels certain interests is no reason for depreciating them. It is just a fact that, by her very nature, that is the kind of thing a woman likes—she finds that it fulfils or expresses her personality and therefore contributes to her happiness. In the same way there are male interests which seem incomprehensible to women as regards the degree of importance attached to them.

Evidently there is no reason why this situation should not be

dealt with in a sane and rational way. Yet misunderstanding and lack of sympathy, especially when they extend to deeper issues and, in particular, to the more intimate sides of sexual life, are fruitful causes of unhappy marriages. It is important for both man and wife to realize the kind of situation with which they will be confronted, and to anticipate it by taking all opportunities of understanding the opposite sex before marriage. Every effort should be made to develop sympathetic imagination and insight in order to understand the point of view of the other partner in marriage, and, where the difference is so fundamental as to make this impossible, to accept it as a fact without ridicule or resentment, which has to be fitted into the pattern of the dual life. Difficulty will no doubt arise where differences relate to matters in which some decision or action has to be taken, but these should be dealt with on the plane of rational discussion, full weight being given to factors which are of an 'intuitive' rather than an intellectual character, and not in an atmosphere of sensitiveness, aggressiveness, or censorious criticism. Where differences are finally irresolvable it would seem a sane principle for husband and wife to agree beforehand on the respective provinces in which the judgment of one or the other will be loyally accepted as final.

Another condition of a happy marriage is that the situation involved in it should not be, broadly speaking, stationary. The relation should be a truly creative one, at levels appropriate to the individuals concerned. On the negative side there should be no attempt to limit the conditions of personal life through any kind of jealousy or possessiveness, while, on the positive side, each partner should not only seek every opportunity of enriching his or her own personality, and this will in itself react favourably on the relations between the two, but should also try to develop continually the pattern of experiences of all kinds which can be shared in common. In particular, no individual can find complete fulfilment and stimulus in all spheres in but one person of the opposite sex, and attempts by married couples to isolate them-

selves are not conducive to successful marriage—on the contrary, the establishment of personal relationships, on the general lines I have described at the beginning of this chapter, by either partner with individuals of the opposite sex can make a valuable contribution, through its reactions on personality, to the success of the marriage itself, always provided that such relationships are, so far as can be judged, in no way inimical to the happiness of all concerned, and have no harmful reactions on the community.

A marriage only approaches its complete fulfilment, however, in the raising of a family. Though the conduct of family life and the bringing up of children still fall, for the most part, considerably short of the ideal, there are sound reasons, on the basis of the relevant evidence, for holding that family life is, at worst, a safeguard against the complete breakdown of a marriage and, at best, the source of greatly increased happiness for husband and wife.

Apart from these considerations, there are two complementary reasons which indicate that the family is the most appropriate type of social unit. On the one hand, children have to be reared and cared for, and the parents are not only those most suitably placed for this task but they alone can provide that background of immediate security and personal love, a background which is still too often deficient, in which children thrive best. On the other hand, the organization of a community in family units gives to it a balance and stability which could probably not be secured to a comparable degree by any other means. It is, however, desirable that members of a family should mix as freely as possible with others, and not form in any sense a segregated and self-centred group. There is a tendency for this to happen sometimes, especially, perhaps, in large families.

The difficulties and responsibilities of parents in bringing up their children are, in any case, so great that it would probably now be generally agreed that the community should see to it that all sources of economic anxiety in regard to this should be removed as far as possible. Ways and means of doing this

constitute another sociological problem of the first importance. Closely connected with this question is that of the appropriate size for a family. Two sound general principles seem to be that families should consist of more than one child, and, so far as possible, should include children of both sexes—a matter which cannot yet be controlled. Apart from these principles it is suggested that the size of the family should be determined only by the wishes and circumstances of the parents, within limits which are such as to make the raising of a family pre-eminently a contribution to, and not a restriction of, the personal life of the parents, while at the same time avoiding the danger of any neglect of the children.

In bringing up children it is important to preserve a right balance between the emotional and the rational; the establishment of a sense of security and the encouragement of independence; and freedom of growth and expression, on the one hand, and control of conduct for family and social reasons on the other. This is an extremely difficult business, and, unfortunately, serious damage may be done early in life of a kind which is subsequently very hard to repair. Moreover, this damage is not always apparent. For example, 'good' behaviour and quietness in a child, which tend to please adults because it saves them trouble, or, by contrast, noisiness and assertiveness, which adults may tend to explain as 'natural,' may equally be symptoms of some underlying maladjustment which may lead to trouble later. But in many cases the damage is quite obvious, and the number of children who present minor or major 'problems' of various kinds is too great for any complacency.

I think this situation can be met only by a wider recognition by parents that the bringing up of children is a task of extreme complexity, beginning at the birth of the child, in which accepted routine and tradition are apt to be misleading guides, and which requires continuous thought and recourse to the best advice obtainable. At the same time the community should take every possible step to make such advice available to parents.

I have pointed out that children feel a great need for a background of love and security; but within this general atmosphere they should be able to feel that particular situations which arise are dealt with on a sane, rational, and objective basis even though they may not be old enough to comprehend this explicitly. If conditions of this kind are established from the beginning the balance to which I have previously referred is the more easily preserved. This is particularly so in regard to the control of conduct, and if need for 'punishment' arises it is a symptom of some failure on the part of parents or other adults. Punishment of children should never be retributive in nature, or carried out in an emotional atmosphere, angry or otherwise, for in that case it defeats its own end. Punishment should be rational, should be seen by the child to be rational, and should, as far as possible, be appreciated by him as of a nature designed to help future control of conduct rather than merely to deter by fear of pain.

The general attitude of parents towards children, especially as they grow up, should be not that of superiority or 'possession' towards a dependent or subordinate, but should be directed towards making the child feel that, as a human being, he is regarded as an equal, whose feelings, interests, and opinions are given full weight, though admittedly he lacks the knowledge and experience of his elders, a fact of which account must be taken on both sides. Moreover, when there are a number of children in a family, it is most important that the parents should give no evidence of differences in their regard for the individual children, because some of the latter possess qualities which specially appeal to them, or for any other reason.

It is evident that in all this the nature of the relations between the parents is a paramount influence. No amount of love or tenderness shown to the child by the parents individually can compensate for the unhappy effects on him of the tension set up when the parents are at cross purposes. Children are particularly sensitive to such a situation, and it cannot be fully concealed

from them. The development of the kind of relationship between husband and wife which I have already tried to outline is therefore an indispensable condition of real happiness in family life. Where such a condition is notably absent it calls for serious consideration whether the community ought not to step in to decide whether the happiness of the children, with its social repercussions, would not be better served by removing them from their parents. It is a difficult and delicate question, involving the careful weighing of all factors according to the circumstances of the particular case, but it is of such importance that it ought to be squarely faced. A child can hardly be regarded as the property of his parents, and the paramount consideration is respect for him as an individual in himself whose happiness is an ultimate value.

I have dealt with other points relevant to the relations of parents and children in considering the more general question of the relationship of older to younger people. The detailed exploration of this topic might be pursued indefinitely, but that is beyond my present purpose or the scope of this chapter, in which I have offered for consideration certain general principles which seem to me to be well founded in regard to the influence of personal relationships as such, and particularly those which arise in connexion with sex and family life, on the happiness of individuals and the well-being of the community.



## *Chapter VI*

# *HEALTH*

THE RELATION BETWEEN health and happiness needs no stressing. Although some people manage to achieve a considerable measure of happiness in spite of a serious degree of bodily ill-health, it would hardly be denied that an essential condition of happiness in the fullest sense is a completely healthy organism—body and mind.

For this reason it is natural and right that people should take a keen interest in health; not that kind of morbid interest which results in a valetudinarianism fearful of contracting every kind of disease, but an interest consisting in a positive recognition of the great contribution to happiness which results from the sense of well-being associated with a high degree of health, and a determination so to order life as to achieve, as far as possible, such a desirable condition.

It is true that some misguided persons sneer at, or ridicule even, the positive and constructive attitude to health which I have indicated, declaring that one should carry on as one feels inclined without thinking about one's health. This might be unobjectionable if we had reached that fortunate state in which an approximation to complete health was the rule rather than the exception; but as it is I suspect that such persons are prompted by a psychological mechanism in defence of their own unhealthy habits, and an implicit fear of being urged to changes in their habits, and in some of the features of their environment, which might interfere for a time to some extent with their pleasure and comfort.

It is a truism that mental and physical health are closely inter-related—indeed, in the end, they are probably inseparable. But they can be dealt with as distinct aspects of a single

condition, and in this chapter I shall be concerned mainly with physical health. Mental health involves so many sides of the whole personality that, apart from some references at the end of this chapter to certain types of mental attitude or function which have an immediate bearing on physical well-being, I shall leave the general question of mental health to be dealt with, by implication, in my closing chapter.

It is sometimes said that it is impossible to define the term 'health' precisely. I feel that this statement is perhaps too sweeping. Every bodily organ or part seems to manifest a pattern defining an ideal structure, even though the particular organ or part examined may be palpably defective in some respect; while at the same time, when in action, it indicates an ideal method of functioning even though, again, the actual process may be to some extent defective in the particular instance. Health might then be defined with reference to these ideal standards, defect from 'perfect' health consisting in the degree of departure from these standards.

Structure and function are, of course, closely interdependent, and can probably only be defined completely in terms of biological purpose. This purpose, again, is relative to the environment of the organism, and it is here that the difficulty of defining 'health' is perhaps most apparent. For there is always a tendency on the part of the organism to adjust structure and function to environmental changes, interpreted in the widest sense, and the question therefore arises as to when such adaptations are to be regarded as 'unhealthy.' The truth is that we must consider organism and environment together. But human beings have a considerable measure of control over the details of their environment. It therefore seems reasonable to suggest as an aim a control of the environment, and a consequent adaptation of structure and function, of such a kind as to produce in the individuals concerned the highest possible degree, for the longest possible time, of that sense of bodily well-being which is so important a factor in happiness. Level of health would then be

defined in terms of approximation to the achievement of this aim.

I am not directly concerned with the great contribution to health made by medical treatment and medical research, but with the contribution which the individual himself can make to his own health, and therefore to that of the community, by the way in which he lives. These two factors evidently interact, but the only comment I will make here on the former is to draw attention to the notable, and desirable, tendency of medical practice to shift its emphasis to the preservation of good health and the prevention of ill-health, while continuing to give due attention to the cure of disease when this has been contracted. This tendency is more and more taking the form, not merely of protecting mankind against the results of its own bad habits, but of determining wise rules of living and, as a result, educating the community and its members to substitute good health for bad.

Two facts have always seemed to me to constitute a standing challenge—if not a standing disgrace—to our civilization. The first is that most of us, from our earliest years, drag about with us a load of what are, relatively and initially, minor ills which take the fine edge off living and so detract seriously from potential happiness. I am not referring here to the results of degenerative processes or of infections of parasitic origin which occur from time to time in the form of individual breakdowns or epidemics that affect whole groups. I am speaking rather of such minor ill-defined conditions as headaches, lassitude, loss of appetite, foot troubles, skin troubles, gastro-intestinal ailments, and so on (some of which I realize may ultimately be due to parasitic agents), which are not in themselves, and for the time being, regarded as very serious, but which produce a definite lowering of 'tone' in the human organism.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the almost universal prevalence of such ills, in some degree at every age, is due to fundamental faults in our way of living and in the environment we make for ourselves. So far as I am aware, there is nothing

corresponding to this in animals living in a natural state. It is true that these have, from time to time, their own diseases and pests and their own epidemics, but I suggest that, so far as one can judge, they live in general at a level of health undiminished by multifarious ailments of the kind which I have listed as manifest in human beings.

The second disturbing and challenging fact, which is no doubt connected with the first, is that bodily death in human beings, instead of taking place as a peaceful passing at the end of a process of gradually waning vitality, is accompanied in most cases by some unpleasant disease and occurs in circumstances of considerable pain and indignity.

The main bodily processes and conditions can be broadly grouped under the following five headings: physical activity, rest and sleep, breathing, nutrition, and elimination. In the case of the first two and the last of these accurate knowledge now seems reasonably clearly defined, and practice is well on the way to conformity with it.

Much attention has been given to the development of sound types of bodily activity and to that specially organized form of the latter known as 'physical training.' The associated techniques have undergone considerable change in the course of recent years, of a kind which it seems reasonable to regard as progressive, and an increasing number of people are now aware of the importance of this aspect of bodily life and are prepared to act accordingly.

The importance of adequate and suitable rest and sleep is also now generally recognized, together with the most effective means of ensuring this. It is worth referring, however, to the well-established value of deliberate bodily relaxation, as distinct from casual rest. There is a simple technique of beneficial relaxation which has to be acquired—though this is no difficult matter—and the spread of knowledge on this might well be encouraged.

The essential necessity of regular and adequate elimination

through all bodily channels designed for that purpose, including the skin, has been realized from time immemorial, but there have been considerable advances in specific knowledge on this point, though some questions remain controversial. Much still remains to be done, however, in securing completely healthy habits in this respect in the community at large.

The position is, perhaps, less satisfactory in the case of breathing. The importance of correct breathing can hardly be exaggerated in view of the function of oxidation as a prime factor in metabolic process. It is significant that the esoteric cults have all laid special stress on the development of correct breathing technique. Stripped of their mystic associations, the principles laid down in this respect have for the most part a sound physiological basis. But, although the importance of correct breathing is widely recognized, practice lags, in general, far behind theory, and it would be an advantage if more systematic training could be given in this field.

Finally, the process of nutrition presents what is perhaps the most difficult problem of all, and the possibility of error in regard to it is correspondingly great.

It seems now clearly established that, for effective nutrition, there must be an adequate intake of (a) protein, fats, and carbohydrates; (b) certain minerals; and (c) certain vitamins, while the quality and quantity of food and drink must be such as to preserve a correct chemical balance in the bodily structures. It is, perhaps, true to say that, while considerable progress has been made recently, both in theory and practice, in connexion with (a), (b), and (c), especially under the stress of emergency, the position is less advanced in regard to methods of maintaining a correct acid-alkaline balance and the forming of sound food (and drink) habits in this respect.

But it is not enough to provide adequate food of the kind indicated; there is a factor on the bodily side which is essential to the effective assimilation and utilization of food. This consists primarily in the activity and balance of the hormones. Hormonic

dysfunction of any kind tends to interfere with the process of nutrition. On the other hand, adequate and suitable food is an essential condition of correct harmonic function; the two factors, food intake and harmonic activity, are, indeed, complementary.

I have sketched in outline the elements of the nutritional process on which it is of the first importance that accurate knowledge should be achieved and general practice established in conformity with that knowledge. But one or two points of special interest stand out, and these have been the subject of much discussion and controversy.

The first of these is the question of the eating of flesh foods, in regard to which I shall consider only the hygienic side, and not the ethical problem.<sup>1</sup> Age-long dispute has centred on this question. The only reasonably well-established facts seem to be that it is possible to frame a complete diet for a human being without including flesh, but that some forms of meat, and similar foods, constitute a convenient and readily assimilated material for the feeding of certain essential nutritive elements to the body.

Apart from these facts, arguments advanced on both sides of the controversy seem to be largely of an *a priori* nature, or based on general impressions. Those opposed to flesh foods argue that they are an exceptionally prolific source of toxic residues—mainly, it is said, because flesh putrefies so rapidly in the digestive and eliminatory systems. On the other side it is stated that whatever substance there may be in this assertion can be discounted in the case of a suitable and well-balanced diet, and that meat is a valuable food.

One thing seems clear, and that is that the correct answer to this question may be a matter of great importance to human health. It is generally agreed that excess of meat, or of anything else, is bad, and that meat consumption used to be too high; but

<sup>1</sup> So that I may be excused the suspicion of personal bias in what follows I should perhaps say that I take, in moderation, meat, tea, coffee, alcohol, and tobacco—though whether or not against my better judgment may appear from the text.

it does not follow that *any* meat consumption is bad. And so the dispute goes on without ever, so far as I am aware, being put to the test of a properly conducted experiment of a crucial type. I submit that there is urgent need for such an experiment.

The question of drink is also of exceptional importance. All the experts agree that water, and many fruit and vegetable juices, are drinks *par excellence*. But what is to be said of 'stimulants' such as alcohol (which is not really a stimulant), tea, and coffee? Here there is a greater amount of objective evidence than in the case of meat-eating. Without pressing the point that the continual feeding to the body of small quantities of toxic substances seems *a priori* likely to be harmful, I think it would be fair to say, without exaggeration, that the evidence goes to show that if a generation could be brought up which never acquired the alcohol habit it would be a definitely healthier generation. The same seems to be almost certainly true also in the case of tobacco, which is not in any sense a 'food,' and probably, though to a less extent, in the case of tea and coffee.

To some people even the suggestion that it *might* be beneficial to give up the taking of such things as alcohol, tobacco, tea, and coffee would seem almost like proposing to knock the bottom out of life. They would urge that stimulants are sometimes necessary, that they intensify the pleasure of social and other occasions, while, on the other hand, a practice like that of smoking is soothing and a valuable aid to relaxation. But for the intensification of pleasure the really healthy person needs no further stimulus than his own sense of well-being, which enables him to respond spontaneously to social and recreative situations that are the occasion of special enjoyment. It is lack of complete health which creates the feeling of need for adventitious aids, the use of which may lower the level of health still further, and, for this reason, and through the establishment of habits, result in a vicious circle.

A third question is that of hot cooked, or raw cold food. I think that all that can be said on this point is that we have not at

present sufficient evidence to make possible wide generalizations. There is increasing knowledge as to food substances whose nutritive value is definitely lowered by heating, and the result has been a steady improvement in practice. But it is not yet possible to go farther in regard to the view, held by many people, that cooking in almost any form is to be deprecated. It is, however, of great importance in any case that food should be well cooked, and attractively served in pleasant surroundings.

There is one other point to which reference should, I think, be made in this connexion, and that is the question whether, apart from necessity in the case of illness, fasting is beneficial, and, if so, in what manner and to what extent. Views on this point vary between wide extremes, and they are equally divergent with regard to the causes of the uncomfortable symptoms which generally accompany a fast, especially in the initial stages. Again, so far as I know, there have been no crucial and properly controlled experiments in this matter. Yet if only some of the statements made about fasting are true the matter is one of great importance in the preservation of health, and there is accordingly much need for authoritative and precise guidance in regard to it, based on the results of systematic experiment.

Whatever men and women may do to improve their own habits in regard to health the result will be largely nullified if they do not at the same time take steps to secure the best possible environmental conditions, so far as they are able to control these. This is a point which need not be laboured, for the unhealthy conditions under which home life, work, leisure, and recreation exist for many (and to some extent for all) sections of the population are sufficiently obvious. A great improvement in this respect is one of the essentials for increasing the happiness of the community.

The foregoing discussion of physical health might perhaps be briefly summarized by saying that, without in any sense prejudging the issue, the most likely fields in which to look for the fundamental physical causes of the challenging facts to which I



referred earlier are those related to breathing habits, elimination, the eating of flesh foods, the taking of stimulants and tobacco, the cooking of food, and the nature of the environment, including, it may be remarked, the matter of clothing. There is urgent need for decisive experiment in all these fields, and the results obtained might not only lead to a general raising of bodily health in itself, but also to an increased capacity in the human organism to immunize itself against serious infection of parasitic origin both by a rise in positive power of resistance and by a greater ability to receive the inevitable doses of 'infection' in a degree sufficient to aid immunity without succumbing to mass invasion.

Even if experiment should yield decisive results, however, there would still remain the problem of persuading or educating the community to change its habits in certain respects. This is not primarily a problem of hygiene, but one for sociology and psychology. Evidently the first move must come from adults, for, even though it might not prove too difficult to give the young suitable education in such matters, this education would be largely ineffective while the faulty example of the older generation remained. Until human beings are prepared to take themselves seriously in hand the hindrances to happiness produced by major and minor defects in bodily health will continue.

I will now consider briefly certain aspects of the 'mental' side of health, although, as I have already remarked, this is so intimately bound up with the whole life of the individual that I shall postpone the discussion of its fuller implications till my last chapter. There are, however, one or two matters here which are so immediately connected with bodily health that I will make an incidental reference to them at this point.

In the first place, it is interesting to note that the evidence seems to show that those feelings and emotions which imply mental disharmony or conflict have an adverse effect on bodily health. Among such feelings and emotions are, for instance,

those of anger, jealousy, and anxiety. They are of various degrees of complexity, and it is not my purpose here to subject them to psychological analysis.

On the other hand, the feelings and emotions associated with harmony or serenity, such as joy and tenderness, tend to be beneficial in their bodily effects.

Moreover, the general attitude of selfishness, just because it involves, or may involve, over-aggressiveness, jealousy, and strain and anxiety to obtain the best for oneself, leads to bodily effects, not always directly or immediately apparent, which are harmful; while the altruistic attitude, implying sympathy and consideration for others, and therefore some immunity from personal hurt, leads to general physical effects of a beneficial kind. The selfish attitude is restrictive; the altruistic, expansive. These facts are no doubt the basis for the belief held by some cults in the importance of what they call 'right thinking' as opposed to 'wrong thinking,' though 'thinking,' properly so-called, is only involved in the deliberate and rational effort to adopt that general attitude of mind which is coloured by beneficial feelings and emotions. In brief, those states of mind which are characterized by harmony and happiness tend to raise the level of bodily health, while those which are characterized by conflict and unhappiness tend to lower it.

A special word should, perhaps, be said about that complex of mental factors which constitute what is called 'anxiety' or, in some of its manifestations, 'worry.' Most people have suffered from this at some time and in some degree, and we are all familiar with the futile advice, 'Don't worry.' Unless the condition has got out of control, when expert treatment may be necessary, there are, I think, two simple rules for dealing with it. The first is to face the situation squarely, and to try through reflection to discover as far as possible just what is the cause of the anxiety. The second is to consider any possible *action* that may be taken in regard to it, and to proceed to take that action, or, if this is not immediately possible, to plan it and put it in train.

It should be added that fear is a common accompaniment of, or factor in, anxiety.

Another point to which I would draw attention is the now well-known fact that much benefit is to be derived from regular mental relaxation, using that term not in the sense of 'recreation,' but as connoting the deliberate adoption of a state of mental repose in which the thought processes are, as it were, 'switched off.' Mental relaxation is an art, but one which it is not too difficult to acquire, and mental and physical relaxations are most profitably practised together.

On the mental side, then, one might perhaps say that the most likely causes of defective health are to be looked for in a generally selfish attitude of mind, in the widest sense, in liability to anxiety and fear, and failure to deal effectively with this, and in a continuous state of mental tension without adequate relaxation.

I will conclude with a brief reference to the question of auto-suggestion. Some years ago the practice of autosuggestion gained considerable prominence, and a belief in its efficacy was widely held; but since then, partly as a result of certain occurrences, it has fallen into a state of comparative obscurity, if not of disrepute.

On the evidence the facts seem to be that the potential influence of deliberate autosuggestion on the well-being of the individual is great, and may sometimes be profound; and that where it has failed the most probable reasons for its failure are inappropriate circumstances or unsound technique. The main essentials of an effective technique appear to be regularity, combination with complete physical and mental relaxation, the putting of the suggestion into a form such that the results of it are regarded as desirable, and the diversion of attention from it except during the set periods. But it is not a matter which I can pursue further here. I would only add that there is little doubt that, in many cases, the practice of properly controlled auto-suggestion can be highly beneficial and that, in such cases, it is well worth acquiring the necessary technique.

## Chapter VII

### THE DEVELOPING PERSONALITY

THE NATURE of the conditions which determine the moulding of personality is fundamental for the happiness both of the individual and of the community as a whole. This moulding consists essentially in the control of development and its adjustment to the physical, biological, and social environment. It is a life-long and continuous process, and not merely something which is carried on in particular places and at particular ages, and one of its main problems is how to control without undue restriction. To understand it adequately and order it effectively one must view it as a whole, and not only in its several aspects and stages. I shall deal, for the most part, only with its broader and more general features.

In every individual there is the impulse to grow and to mature. Although the individual cannot be viewed in complete isolation from his environment it is, I think, true to say that in every case there is a *natural* pattern and rhythm of development. It is therefore important to contrive that growth is guided so far as possible along these natural lines, with the minimum of restriction and frustration, subject to certain determining conditions in the environment and in the end finally aimed at. But, ideally, both the environment and the end will themselves conform to the natural development of the individual, so that we have really a two-sided process in the course of which not only the individual but also the environmental conditions and the physical, social, and spiritual purposes of the process are moulded into a shape consonant with the form in which progress is conceived, whether this be the general increase of happiness, as I suggest, or anything else.

It will be clear from the foregoing that all controlled develop-

ment is a form of conditioning. But it must be remembered that there are different levels of conditioning. There are in every individual, just because he is an *individual*, certain spontaneous, unique, and creative impulses to activity of all kinds. Development produces a state in which there is some kind of adjustment between these impulses and routine forms of physical and mental activity. In the more drastic types of conditioning, creative and spontaneous activity is greatly reduced in comparison with routine habit, and we have the spectacle, not only of people who are the creatures of a rigid physical and social routine, but also of people who, at any rate in some fields, are able to *think* (if it can be called 'thinking') only along certain well-defined lines prescribed and suggested by others. On the other hand, the more moderate and, as I should hold, more enlightened types of conditioning are guided only by the aim of applying the minimum amount of control of free development necessary to establish the *modus vivendi* which will make the greatest contribution to general progress in happiness. This results in human beings who are able to adjust themselves easily and with zest to the vagaries of their physical and social environment, and who are capable of tolerance, comparative freedom of judgment, and readiness to thrash out problems on a rational and objective basis.

I know that it is maintained by some that a fairly rigid process of conditioning may be an important factor in producing a state of happiness in some people, perhaps those of rather lower mental calibre. It is no doubt true that such a process may produce a certain degree of happiness, though, even so, I doubt if 'happiness' is really the right word. The state of mind induced seems to me more akin to that of comfort and complacency, in which certain fundamental responsibilities have been unloaded and many problems and difficulties resolved, not by the person concerned, but by others for him. In any case, I believe that, even for such people, there is a much greater *potentiality* for happiness in allowing them more freedom in development even

if it means that they will have to face themselves and meet, in their own way and at their own level, certain difficulties which they would otherwise have avoided.

If my general thesis is sound it would follow that the development of the individual should be so guided as to realize to the fullest possible degree his potentialities, not only in regard to his own happiness, but also in respect of the contribution which he can make to the happiness of the community. These aims are complementary and interdependent.

Reference to the analysis of the factors involved in happiness, which I attempted near the beginning of my first chapter, indicates the closely related lines of advance towards achieving the aims which I have just described. In the first place, we should endeavour to produce in every individual a state of mind which is free from tension and conflict, through control of development by guidance rather than by suppression and undue restriction, for these lead inevitably to mental conflict and a sense of frustration, as well as to open or concealed rebellion against 'authority.' At the same time, all possible steps should be taken to bring people into satisfactory relations with their surroundings, physical and social. The 'discipline' involved in all this would consist in leading them to a realization of the necessity of adapting themselves to these surroundings, in the interests both of their own well-being and of the well-being of the community, and in accustoming them to accept this necessity and to act upon it readily and rationally.

Secondly, the widest possible scope and opportunity should be given to everyone to develop all forms of activity, mental and physical, and especially creative activity, in the ways most appropriate to his particular nature and circumstances, and with all the zest and effort which this tends naturally to evoke. This will involve the provision of possibilities of adequate experience in all fields—experience in words, symbolism, and abstract thinking, science, art, crafts, and music. Every encouragement should be given to the cultivation in all these

fields of fully assimilated knowledge and the joy and pride of craftsmanship.

Thirdly, the individual should be led, by steps which keep pace with, but do not outrun, his increasing development, to contemplate and enjoy beauty, order, and reason in all fields and in every form which he is capable of appreciating.

The relations of the individual to the community should be gradually moulded into shape with particular reference to his life occupation, so that he may derive the greatest joy and benefit from this and at the same time make the greatest possible contribution to the community. Moreover, every attempt should be made to create in him the desire and the ability to continue the development of his personality throughout life, both at work and at leisure, along the most fruitful lines.

I think that if we approach the development of personality from some such point of view as I have indicated we shall avoid the unfortunate attitude which deplores the fact that some people are of 'lower' calibre (especially intellectual calibre) than others, and which regards such people as inferior, or lacking, and therefore to be pitied. But ruling out extremes which are really pathological in nature, the differences in question between individuals are purely relative and are a perfectly natural biological and psychological phenomenon. Variety is the rule in nature, and is certainly preferable to a deadly uniformity; and where there is variety there must be a greater and a lesser. We should regard the individual ultimately, not in terms of 'power' or capacity in particular fields, but in terms of value, that is in terms of his potentiality in regard to his own happiness and to the contribution which he can make to the happiness and well-being of the community. But there is no reason why this *potentiality* should vary with differences in calibre of the kind we have been considering. We have, in fact, ourselves often imposed hardships on persons of lower calibre by our attitude towards them and by our faulty methods of treating them. Hence they come to regard themselves as inadequate and inferior, which makes matters

worse, so that their potentiality for happiness falls far short of realization. But if we relate our standards to the individual and to his situation, and remember that everything is, in fact, relative in this way, there is no reason why a fuller measure of happiness and fulfilment should not be achieved by all.

An important aim of the process I have described would be to fit every one to play his part eventually, according to his nature, in all the fields I have been considering, namely those of politics, economics, and personal and social relationships. Here it is essential to cultivate in all individuals, at every age and at every level, the ability to think out and to talk out, in a reasonable way and to a definite conclusion, all kinds of topics and problems of interest to them, and within their comprehension. At the same time they should be accustomed to discount the influence of emotional and other factors of an irrational or misleading kind, and, again at their own level, to size up the ideas and suggestions which are put to them, as well as the persons or agencies who put them.

This brings us to a crucial point. In considering the development of personality we pay great attention to intellectual, practical, and vocational activities, both as ways to learning and as means to the acquisition of knowledge and skill. But comparatively little is done in regard to the understanding and control of the emotional and associated aspects of life. Partly as a result of this the emotional development of most people fails to keep pace with their physiological and intellectual development, and they remain in many respects at an infantile level throughout their lives. I use the term 'infantile' here in a somewhat extended sense to include the earlier stages of adolescence during which, indeed, there is a tendency to relive the patterns of experience which have been associated with the initial infantile stage, though in a modified form.

If we observe and analyse the behaviour of other people, and also our own behaviour, we must, I think, conclude that the origins of its motivation are very frequently such impulses as



vanity, self-assertiveness, jealousy, greed, the desire to exercise power for its own sake, anxiety about 'dignity' or 'prestige,' need for continual reassurance as to our own worth and effectiveness, self-dramatization and 'posing.' These impulses are essentially infantile in character. Indeed, it is probably true that few people attain complete, or nearly complete, adulthood, and we should therefore be continually on our guard against the influence on our motives and behaviour of infantile fixations, and against the tendency to rationalize conduct unwarrantably by evolving specious reasons for actions which are really determined by irrational factors.

I should like to make a short digression here to draw attention to the great potential danger to the community at large of the combination of adult intelligence with infantile emotionality. When in a whole nation the general level of infantile fixation falls below a certain level the result is inevitably war. I think it would be generally agreed that the behaviour of the nationals of the characteristically aggressor states, not only during war itself, but on more ordinary occasions, is often typically symptomatic of emotional infantility.

The great difficulty in improving the situation I have described arises from the fact that it has created a kind of vicious circle. This vicious circle can be broken only by appropriate action on the part of a growing number of adults who have, in this respect, come to enlightenment. We want to accustom people to behaving rationally at their own level and in dealing with their own problems, individual and communal, and we should provide them with suitable conditions and opportunities for this—for example, through the medium of free, tolerant, and amicable discussion of the kind I have mentioned earlier. But they must be able to count on rational motivation and behaviour in those to whom they look for inspiration and guidance.

We do not, of course, wish to produce passionless and morbidly self-critical intelligence—far from it. The real point is that the final control of life situations should be rational, though

sometimes based in part on non-rational (not irrational) factors, such as intuitive insight, which are themselves rationally interpreted—indeed, in the last analysis perhaps all action is based on some kind of intuitive faith. But within the rationally controlled situation natural and spontaneous feeling and emotion should have full play, for this alone gives joy, zest, and colour to life. Moreover, the exercise of reason itself, theoretical and practical, is often fired by emotional accompaniments.

I cannot help feeling that an ultimately rational control of all life situations is essential to general harmony and happiness. But the present position is far from being in accord with this. For the reasons I have described final controls are too often irrational in kind, notably in situations involving human beings in the mass, and I believe that this is one of the chief causes of the parlous condition in which the world and the groups of human beings in it—from large national and international groups down to small family groups—find themselves to-day.

I know that some people deprecate systematic rationalization, such as I advocate, and emphasize the importance of what they sometimes call the 'human' approach to a given situation. But they seem to me to confuse the determinants of a situation with the method of approach to it. Final rational controls and the human approach are surely not incompatible, but complementary; indeed, the latter must fail of effectiveness in the absence of the former. The fact is that there is a logic, as well as a psychology, of every situation, and this logic cannot be ignored or defied except at the price of blind unawareness, 'wishful' and 'woolly' thinking, and therefore, in the end, comparative futility. It is only by a thoroughgoing logical analysis of a situation, and of all the implications and likely results of a given action in regard to it, that such action can be made psychologically and materially relevant and effective.

I should like to conclude this chapter with a plea for a certain leisureliness in the operation of the external factors controlling the development of the life process. If we survey that process, in

all its aspects, as it exists to-day, we cannot fail, I think, to be impressed by a certain sense of pressure, urgency, and haste which it manifests. The *tempo* seems to be getting beyond the capacity of the individual to cope with it. One result is an aggravation of the frequency—the distressing frequency—of anxieties, fears, and other minor and sometimes major neuroses. Here, again, I feel that the root cause of the trouble is an ideology of competition and conflict instead of one of mutual regard and co-operation; an ideology the influence and results of which have spread into all fields and phases of life. It is not that I think—and I should perhaps have said this before—that there are no contexts in which a spirit of competition (or, better, emulation) is appropriate, if this is marked by friendliness and good will and if, in the result, it has a contribution to make to the general well-being; but the idea of competition has got out of proportion, and is a deep determining factor. In no field will it be possible to effect changes making for greater happiness while this state of affairs continues to exist.

## *Chapter VIII*

### *THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL*

PROGRESS DEPENDS in the end on the way in which individuals order their own lives and on the efforts they are prepared to make in revising, or even reorganizing, their ways of thinking and acting in such a way as to increase as much as possible their contributions to the welfare and happiness of all.

We are accustomed to speak of the community rather as if it were an entity in itself, and it is true that an organized group of individuals has potentialities greater than the sum of the potentialities of the separate members of the group considered as living and acting in comparative isolation. But we can hardly suppose that the welding of individuals into a community generates a kind of 'over-soul' which is a definite spiritual agent in itself, existentially distinguishable from the individual spiritual beings that make up the community group. Philosophies which include the idea of the 'over-soul' have been advanced from time to time, but this idea is not, I think, taken seriously now by many people. We are therefore bound to regard the activities of the community, as well as of its separate members, as ultimately determined by the nature of the latter.

In the various chapters of this book I have suggested certain general principles which, if acted upon, would imply particular kinds of behaviour on the part of individuals. In this closing chapter I shall consider the life of the individual more explicitly, especially in its relation to the possibility of giving effect to the principles in question.

I believe the first necessary step to be the acceptance of the two main theses which I have supported. The first is that the only intelligible ultimate aim of human existence is a state of being completely satisfying and desirable in itself, and I have

suggested that we have a partial and fragmentary disclosure of the essential nature of such a state in the experience we call 'happiness.' It may be difficult, and perhaps impossible, to describe precisely what we mean by happiness, but the term, being the name we give to a certain state in ourselves, has, in fact, a definite significance for every one. Moreover, though its precise description may not be possible, happiness seems to me to have certain fairly well defined and readily definable aspects, which I tried to bring out in my first chapter.

My second thesis is that reality is such that the happiness of each person is inextricably bound up with the happiness of others. I believe this to be a fact of actual experience, which is disclosed beyond doubt in observation and reflection. It follows that an individual can only realize to the full his own potentiality for happiness if he seeks to ensure the happiness of others.

Two points arise here which need some clarification. The first concerns the possible objection that some people who act selfishly seem happy enough. To this I should reply that there are degrees of happiness, for it is certainly significant to speak of being more, or less, happy, and that it is no doubt true that a selfish person can attain in some respects a certain measure of happiness. But I believe that this measure falls far below what he could attain if he were less selfish, and that his selfishness militates steadily against any increase in his happiness. Moreover, if we could look into the mind of a selfish person I think we should find elements of strain and conflict which are the negation of happiness. One's own experience when acting selfishly seems to bear this out. It is, of course, true that pleasure or comfort may be temporarily increased, or at any rate preserved, by a selfish act, but these are transitory phases of experience which must be carefully distinguished from happiness, which is a relatively stable and enduring state of mind.

Even if we take it on the lowest ground, it is a matter of experience that if in our behaviour we persistently ignore the happiness of others their reactions are likely to be such as to

interfere materially with our happiness. But it is also a matter of experience that if we show consideration for others it tends generally to evoke from them consideration for ourselves. Whatever human relationship one takes—for example, employers and employees, parents and children, leaders and led—I would maintain that experience itself shows that an attitude of mutual regard and consideration makes a greater contribution to the happiness of *all* concerned than does an attitude based simply on self-interest and the idea of the conflict of interests. We cannot isolate ourselves in the pursuit of happiness, and the actions of the selfish person in the end defeat their own aim in seeking for a completely satisfying state of being.

The second of the points to which I referred above concerns the underlying motive in 'self-sacrifice,' whether on a large or a small scale. It might be urged against my position in this matter that the motive in question is in the nature of a 'moral' impulse associated with the ideas of duty or obligation. I analysed the concepts involved here in my third chapter, where I tried to bring out the difficulties which seem to arise in regard to them. More positively I would say that, where a person makes an act of self-sacrifice—even a supreme act—he behaves as he does because, even though his act may lead immediately to pain or even to death, to refrain from it would set up such a negation of happiness in the form of inner conflict and disharmony that he could not face it. He prefers to act so that, even if he suffers transitory pain, the final result is a greater degree of harmony and peace of mind than if he had refrained; and this is true even if the action leads to death, though I should agree that it is then intelligible only on the ground of a belief in life after bodily death, or, if this belief is lacking, understandable only because the person prefers death to the state of mind he would be in if he refrained from the act of self-sacrifice. I do not, of course, mean that he reasons all this out on the spot, but his actions are determined by considerations of the kind I have described which are implicit in the whole general and comparatively stable pattern of

his nature in the state to which it has developed, and we must distinguish this persistent factor from the influence of considerations regarding transitory pain and discomfort. It is true that the individual may conceive and name the impulse which moves him in various ways according to the circumstances of his upbringing; but I would hold that, however it is named or conceived, this impulse really consists in taking the way which is believed, implicitly if not explicitly, to lead to a greater degree of that harmony, self-fulfilment, and inward peace which are essential factors in the experience of happiness. Hence although, in the moment of action, the impulse may not be, and often is not, consciously self-centred or self-regarding, the ultimate criterion is the effect on the experience of that self.

I would, indeed, go farther and maintain that the conception of a 'moral law' or a 'moral responsibility' which might require actions leading in the end not merely to transitory pain, but to a definite increase in mental and spiritual disharmony or conflict, is unintelligible. If, however, the supposed 'moral law' is conceived in such a way that actions in accordance with it always lead in the end to an increase in inner harmony, and therefore in happiness, the concept is redundant, for an ethic conceived in terms of actual experience has a practical significance which is lacking in one based on the conception of a hypothetical moral law.

In brief, my position in this connexion might be summarized somewhat as follows: a man is moved both by selfish and by altruistic impulses, their relative strengths varying with the individual. But altruism and true self-interest are interdependent, so that, whatever the immediate consequences in terms of pleasure or comfort, altruism leads to individual as well as communal happiness, while selfishness militates against it. These are not hypotheses, but facts disclosed directly in experience and in reflection upon it. Hence, they serve as concrete grounds for determining principles of conduct, making it unnecessary to have recourse to an ethic based on abstract and hypothetical

sanctions. Moreover, in view of these facts, and of the fact that, in a given situation, a man behaves as he does because he is what he is, the idea of moral responsibility should be replaced by the search for the factual reasons for types of conduct and for methods of altering conduct where it leads to unhappiness. We should never condemn, but should seek always to understand and to help. Indignation is a pointless and wasteful, if not positively harmful, emotion, and though it may ostensibly be 'righteous,' it can so easily be self-righteous. It is true, however, that in searching for the ultimate ground, in the nature of reality, of the facts of experience which I have noted, we are led (as I believe) to a philosophical theism, but this is a matter of metaphysics and not of ethics.

Let us pass now to a consideration of the practical steps to be taken if we are to increase our own happiness and that of our fellows. I remember once hearing it said that there was little hope of progress in the world until a large proportion of its population received psycho-analytic treatment! I think this conclusion is unduly pessimistic. It is true that in more extreme cases of mental disturbance or conflict a course of psycho-analysis, or some other form of skilled psychological treatment, may be needed to put matters right. It is also true that the results of modern psychological research, even when dealing with pathological cases, have greatly illumined the working of the more or less 'normal' mind, especially in relation to human behaviour and its motivation. But I think that, in the case of most people, much could be done by a cool and critical self-examination, and I believe this to be one of the first steps to be taken on the road to greater happiness.

In the preceding chapter I referred to the fact that the motivation of adult behaviour was frequently irrational in character, often as a result of infantile fixations. I suggest that self-examination should begin by a critical review of one's *general* mode of behaviour as illustrated in the setting of particular types of situation. The questions might be asked, "How do I actually behave to my wife (or husband), my family, my friends and acquaintances,



my colleagues, and so on, and, also, when I am alone?—and, especially, how do I behave to those over whom I have power?”

In answering these questions it is necessary to take a completely honest and objective attitude, and to make an effort of memory and imagination in viewing oneself in the situations concerned.

The individual might next consider the effects of his behaviour—whether he himself feels happier as a result of it, or the reverse, and whether the reactions of other people are such as to imply that their happiness has been increased or diminished by it.

If we are completely honest with ourselves in making an examination of this kind there is no doubt that we shall have to conclude that our behaviour is often such as to militate against happiness both in ourselves and in others, and not merely to cause temporary pain or discomfort which may, in some circumstances, be unavoidable.

Having come to this conclusion, we can seek the cause of the trouble only in the motives which determine our conduct. We should have to take typical situations in which we have failed, judged by the criterion of happiness, and try to analyse the motives underlying our conduct. In doing this we should provisionally discount any rational grounds we may have evolved for acting as we have done, and should ask ourselves whether our *real* motives, conscious or unconscious, might not have been in the nature of the emotional and strictly irrational impulses to which I have already referred. We shall, I think, generally come to the conclusion that our real motives have been of this kind; in some cases we shall be able to see that the motive was more or less conscious, though in the background, in others that there was distinct evidence of the operation of such motives, even though unconscious.

When, through a thoroughgoing and unflinching self-examination of this kind we have come to a fuller understanding of our behaviour and of the motives which led to it, we can act upon the result only by resolving that, in future, we shall make

a steady and deliberate effort so to change our mode of conduct in certain respects as to eliminate as far as possible causes of mental disturbance and conflict in ourselves and of discomfort, distress, or pain in others, except in so far as these may sometimes be seen, on truly rational grounds, to be a necessary transitory phase justified by final results.

A resolution of this kind will at first involve close control of thought and action, in relation to specific situations, especially where these are regarded as likely to be the occasion of difficulty and possible conflict. But as our general mental and spiritual attitude gradually changes the necessity for such continuous close control will diminish, and we shall tend more and more to act naturally and immediately in accordance with the new pattern of living we have chosen.

One consequence of this will be not only a tolerance of the tastes and opinions of others and a corresponding freedom from dogmatism in regard to our own tastes, opinions, or beliefs, but also sympathetic understanding of the behaviour of other people as determined in part by the influences and conditions to which they have been subjected. We shall not feel called upon to pass 'moral' judgments upon others, but to interpret their conduct and, where this seems to us to be unfortunate, to consider how far it may be due to some failure on our own part, and what can be done to improve matters.

We must, however, beware of one danger—namely, lest, in our dealings with individuals, we carry consideration to a degree which is not rationally justified. In so doing we may not only be acting against the true interests of those concerned, but may be frustrating our own development to an extent which hampers unwarrantably our progress in happiness, and also diminishes the contribution we are capable of making to the happiness of others. We should, in fact, try to combine the fullest possible sympathy, consideration and help for other people with a firm, though open-minded, maintenance of our own standards and beliefs, and of the conditions most suitable to our own develop-

ment as individuals and as members of the community. But our motives for this will not be self-assertiveness or aggrandisement, but the result of reasoned thought as to the conduct which is, so far as we can judge, the most appropriate in the circumstances for the interests of all concerned.

Another most important condition of a happy personal life is, I think, the steady development of intellectual, practical, æsthetic, and emotional experience, and the instilling into this of continual freshness and variety. Enrichment of experience makes, directly and indirectly, for increase in happiness; regression or stagnation frustrates it. I feel, therefore, that a sound rule of living is to cultivate a wide range of interests, to continue to develop them, and to be ready always to take up fresh interests or to approach old ones from new angles. This is not an easy matter, but requires steady purpose and effort. But life is, inevitably, marked by many disappointments and sorrows, and the man who has let his mind run to seed, or has concentrated his interests too narrowly, may find himself without resources with which to meet these trials.

A special reference should be made here to the great contribution which social life can make to the happiness of the individual, not only through the interplay of personalities, but also because the enjoyment of some kinds of experience is enhanced if this experience is shared with others. We should therefore seek the society of other people in great measure and variety, remembering always, however, the importance of private and personal life. We should, indeed, try at all times to preserve a sound balance between social and individual life, without sacrificing either to the other.

I referred just now to inevitable griefs and setbacks. Some of these are certain—for example, the death of loved ones. Others can be clearly foreseen as possible though not certain, while others again may be quite unexpected shocks. Many people tend to avoid any thought of such things before they happen, but I cannot help feeling that it makes in the end for greater happiness

and quietness of mind if we prepare ourselves in imagination for such happenings beforehand. We can then brace ourselves to meet the impact of events and have our plan of action ready accordingly; and, so far as sudden shocks are concerned, we can discipline ourselves to fortitude and cultivate a flexibility of thought and action which will support us in face of the unexpected and enable us to make the necessary adjustments without too great difficulty. In this we shall be greatly helped if we can achieve a relaxed calmness, and a freedom from habitual tension, which will come naturally to us in most, if not all, situations. But, having prepared ourselves and made our plans, we need not dwell upon possible misfortunes, but can dismiss them from our minds until the event.

I have spoken of the cultivation of breadth and variety of experience. But experience has two sides—the creative and the appreciative, the active and the contemplative. To realize the full potentialities of life it is necessary to seek both forms of experience, and to develop our capacities for both to the highest possible degree. The fundamental rhythm of happy and harmonious living lies in the transition back and forth from the intense, active, and creative phase to the calm, relaxed, and contemplative phase. This finds its expression in all realms of experience—in art, music, science, literature, philosophy, and personal and social relationships.

I have deliberately left until a late stage in this chapter the consideration of the part played by religion in individual life. I feel that the main facts here are simple and clear, though they could be discussed in detail indefinitely, but that the mistake which is made with regard to religion is in starting with it instead of leading to it.

In the first place, I think it can hardly be doubted that some people achieve a considerable measure of happiness and a high standard of conduct without having any apparent recourse to religion or holding religious beliefs. They may, in fact, disclaim the latter altogether. But I think it is open to question whether

they would not be even happier were they able to accept a religion as the basis of their philosophy of life. Indeed it is difficult to be sure in any particular case whether they do not really hold some beliefs which could properly be described as religious, even though these may differ considerably from the more usual or conventional forms of religion.

On the other hand, it seems to be equally true that most people find that their happiness is increased by religious faith. I am speaking here of people in a civilization such as our own at the present day, for I do not forget that some primitive religions, and, indeed, the religious beliefs of some Christians in a not very distant past, have been the occasion of fear, based on the ideas of vengeance, propitiation, or retribution, rather than of happiness. But a religion which centres on the conception of God as a benevolent and merciful Being certainly appears to contribute largely to the happiness of those who believe and act upon it. The most obvious reason for this is that such a religion offers a guarantee of ultimate security and happiness, and gives intelligible meaning to the universe. But there are deeper reasons for it if, as I tried to show in my second chapter, religious beliefs of this kind are well-founded in principle.

The degree of happiness and satisfaction which a man derives from his religion depends in part on his way of approach to it, and the most fruitful line of approach will vary with the individual. For my part I think that, for many people, a religion springing from a faith which is rationally based as a result of mental striving is the most satisfying, both intellectually and spiritually.

I believe that only in a religion associated with metaphysical theism can we find an intelligible basis for the concept of what we call 'love,' and a significant interpretation of the various manifestations of love. For I hold that love springs from the essential unity of reality, and that this unity is not just an abstract principle, but a concrete fact grounded in the immanence in the world of the one supreme Being, God. It manifests itself in our

experience differently in different situations, and the sentiments and emotions associated with the experience vary accordingly. Thus the love of God might be interpreted as a sense of oneness or intimate partnership with God in the furtherance of His purposes; while love of neighbour, in a wide sense, would be the intuitive realization of an inter-relatedness and interdependence of individuals requiring mutual regard and consideration if the happiness of all is to be secured. The sense of unity and interdependence reaches for many people its fullest measure in regard to those with whom they are by circumstances most intimately associated, as in the relation between lovers, or between parent and child, and it is in such situations that they accordingly experience love in its most intense form.

## CONCLUSION

In my first chapter I developed a theory of the aim of human existence which seemed to me to give to life a meaning which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to derive in any other way. I have considered the general applications of this theory to the main fields of human experience, and in my final chapter I have tried to outline the methods which the individual might adopt in so ordering his life as to conform with principles of the kind advocated. I have based my argument, in the first instance, not on ethical or religious hypotheses, but on actual experience, and I have really been making a plea for what seem to me to be reason and sanity—I would almost call it elementary sanity—in the conduct of individual and community life. We have undoubtedly reached a crisis in our civilization, and whether we go forward to fulfilment instead of back into chaos and oblivion will depend in the end on our readiness to recognize that the cause of so perilous a state must lie in some deep spiritual defect, and on our willingness to search this out with unsparing honesty and to apply ourselves with all the strength that we can muster to its removal, and to the substitution for it of a spiritual enrichment and a way of life in harmony with the eternal purpose.





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